

# DEFEATING CROSS BORDER INSURGENCIES

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General Studies

by

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## ABSTRACT

DEFEATING CROSS BORDER INSURGENCIES by MAJ Thorsten L. Jørgensen, 136 pages.

History has witnessed numerous examples of cross border insurgencies where the insurgents have operated across international borders: in the 1950s in Algeria, the 1960s and 1970s in Oman, the 1980s in Afghanistan and Kosovo in the 1990s. Presently, the international community has returned yet again to Afghanistan. Using a comparative case study design, the analysis examines the insurgencies in Oman (1960s and 70s), Kashmir (1989 - ) and Afghanistan (2001 - ). This thesis assesses whether COIN efforts can be successful when the insurgents are operating from safe havens in neighboring states. The Oman case study was chosen because the counterinsurgents were successful even though the insurgents had access to safe havens in neighboring Yemen. The ongoing Kashmir insurgency (since 1989 in its current incarnation) depends on heavily cross border support from Pakistan. Afghanistan is the focus of the analysis. Currently, NATO forces and non-NATO allies are engaged in fighting an insurgency which is operating out of safe havens in Pakistan's western provinces (North West Frontier Province, Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Baluchistan).

The methodology applied in this thesis is a combination of the structurally focused Collier-Hoeffler model and Bard O'Neil's process oriented model on insurgencies. A variety of factors ranging from the status of the economy to cross border ethnicity are discussed in order to determine if, and how, a COIN effort can achieve success.

This thesis concludes that in order to be successful against a cross border insurgency, the international community must assume a strategic approach encompassing all the instruments of national power. Prior to the application of the elements of the DIME, the counterinsurgent should conduct a thorough historical and cultural analysis in order to fully comprehend the region in which operations are going to be executed. Once counterinsurgency operations have commenced, progress must appear immediately, especially with regards to issues such as: security, poverty, medical care and unemployment. Finally, cohesion and persistence on the COIN part are crucial. Once engaged in the COIN fight, the international community must stay the course. Incessant political debates regarding extraction, limitation of forces and national caveats only serve the purpose of the insurgency.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE THESIS APPROVAL PAGE .....	ii
CERTIFICATION FOR MMAS DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT .....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
ACRONYMS.....	x
ILLUSTRATIONS .....	xiii
TABLES .....	xiv
CHAPTER 1. Introduction.....	1
Delimitations:.....	3
Limitations: .....	4
Key terms:.....	4
CHAPTER 2. Litteratue Review.....	10
Methodology .....	10
Oman.....	12
Kashmir.....	13
Afghanistan.....	14
Government Documents. ....	15
Other Sources.....	15
CHAPTER 3. Methodology.....	18
First Variable: Geography .....	20
Second Variable: Demographics .....	20
Third Variable: Ethnicity and Cross Border Ethnicity .....	21
Fourth Variable: Economy.....	21
Fifth Variable: Governmental Institutions.....	22
Sixth Variable: External Support.....	22
Seventh Variable: The Insurgency Strategy .....	23



Eight variable: Counterinsurgency Strategy .....	23
CHAPTER 4. Oman Case Study .....	25
Background.....	27
Geography.....	28
Demographics .....	29
Ethnicity and Cross Border Ethnicity .....	30
Economy .....	30
Governmental Institutions.....	32
External Support .....	33
Insurgency Strategy .....	35
COIN Strategy .....	37
CHAPTER 5. Kashmir Case Study .....	46
Background.....	47
Geography.....	49
Demographics .....	51
Ethnicity and Cross Border Ethnicity .....	52
Economy .....	54
Governmental Institutions.....	56
External Support .....	57
Insurgency Strategy .....	59
COIN Strategy .....	63
CHAPTER 6. Afghanistan Case Study.....	73
Background.....	76
Geography.....	79
Demographics .....	82
Ethnicity and Cross Border Ethnicity .....	83
Economy .....	85
Governmental Institutions.....	88
External Support .....	90
Insurgency Strategy. ....	94
COIN Strategy .....	98
CHAPTER 7. Comparisons, Conclusion and Recommendations. ....	113
APPENDIX A. ISAF Regional Commands.....	125
APPENDIX B. ISAF and US Command Structure November 2007 .....	126
APPENDIX C. ISAF Expansion.....	127
APPENDIX D. Case Study Comparison Table .....	128

BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	129
INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST .....	136

## ACRONYMS

ANA	Afghan National Army
AO	Area of Operations
ARTF	Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund
ASF	Afghan Security Forces
BATT	British Army Training Team
CAT	Civil Action Teams
CGSC	Command and General Staff College
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIMIC	Civil Military Cooperation
COIN	Counterinsurgency
DIME	Diplomatic, Informational, Military, Economic
DLF	Dhofar Liberation Front
EU	European Union
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
GWOT	Global War On Terror
HIG	Hizb-I-Islama Gulbuddin
HUA	Hakat –ul-Ansar
HUM	Hizb-ul-Mujahideen
NWFP	North Western Frontier Province
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSS	National Security Strategy
IAK	India Administered Kashmir
IED	Improvised Explosive Device

IGO	International Governmental Organizations
IO	International Organizations
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISI	Directorate of Inter Service Intelligence
JIOC	Joint Intelligence Operations Centre
JKLF	Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
LeT	Lashkar – e- Toiba
LOC	Line of Communication
LoC	Line of Control
NGO	Non Governmental Organizations
NI	Northern Ireland
PAK	Pakistan Administered Kashmir
PDRY	Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen
PFLO	Peoples Front for Liberation of Oman
PFLOAG	Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf
RAW	Indian Intelligence Service
SAF	Sultan of Oman Armed Forces
SAMS	School of Advanced Military Studies
SAS	Special Air Service
SIRI	Strategic Issues Research Institute
TCN	Troop Contributing Nations
TF	Task Force
UAE	United Arab Emirates

UN	United Nations
UNF	United Front of Afghanistan
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Program

## ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
Figure 1. Oman.....	26
Figure 2. Fortified Lines of Dhofar.....	41
Figure 3. Kashmir.....	49
Figure 4. Afghanistan and Pakistan.....	75
Figure 5. Highway One. ....	81
Figure 6. Afghanistan Demographics.....	82
Figure 7. Cross Border Ethnicity in Afghanistan and Pakistan.....	83
Figure 8. Afghan Economy .....	86
Figure 9. Afghan Opium Production.....	87

## TABLES

	Page
Table 1. IAK Demographics .....	52

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

*We regret the loss of Pakistani life in this effort but it shows, I think, good intentions on the part of Pakistan not to allow these tribal areas to be used as a safe haven for the Taliban.*

*Colin Powell*

During the course of history, there are many examples of insurgencies being conducted from safe havens and staging areas in permissive areas in neighboring states. It occurred through most of the conflict in Northern Ireland (NI) when the Irish Republican Army (IRA) launched operations from the Northern areas of neighboring Ireland.<sup>1</sup> In the 1980s, it occurred in Afghanistan, where the Mujahedin operated from bases and staging areas in the western part of Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> In the 1990s, in the Balkans, the Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), mainly consisting of Kosovo-Albanians, operated out of bases in the North Western part of neighboring Albania.<sup>3</sup> Islamic insurgents operating in the Kashmir region have been offered sanctuary in neighboring Pakistan from the late 1980s and until present day. All of the above historical “events” touch on several fundamental questions: What are the implications of cross border issues along the border of a state attempting to counter an insurgency (COIN) and a permissive neighbor (i.e., Pashtuns on the Afghan-Pakistani border or the Muslims in the Kashmir conflict)? What are the implications of the terrain in a border region, where cross border insurgency is being conducted (permissive, limiting and/or mountainous)? What motivates a state to provide safe havens to insurgents (ethnicity, religion, common cause)?

At this time, it is believed that a prerequisite for successfully countering an insurgency with the characteristics of the current one in Afghanistan is a unified approach



deeply founded in historical and cultural understanding. It is essential that all the regional players such as Iran, Pakistan, India, Turkey, Afghanistan, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are involved. Furthermore it is crucial that the solution is not only focused around the establishment of host nation security forces, but also attends to and encompasses the specific conditions in the region, i.e., tribal laws, religious ties and current socio-economic conditions. Finally, it is pertinent to exercise patience on the part of the international community and not impose immediate constraints with regards to resources, especially with issues such as employment, poverty, reconstruction, education and overall time in theater.

In late 2001, the US-led coalition toppled the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. A significant part of the remaining Taliban elements, along with their allies from Al Qaeda, sought refuge in the tribal regions of Pakistan's North Western Frontier<sup>4</sup> Province (NFWP). Taliban and Al Qaeda operatives had relatively uninhibited utilization of the region, from where they could reorganize and regroup, until the spring of 2004. In April 2004, the Pakistani Army launched an offensive which lasted until fall 2006, whereupon a ceasefire agreement between the Pakistani Government and tribal leaders of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) was initiated. In September 2006, a ceasefire agreement was implemented, resulting in the Pakistani Army suspending counter insurgency operations in the FATA.<sup>5</sup> Operating from these safe havens, in the tribal areas of Western Pakistan, Taliban and Al Qaeda elements have increased their cross border insurgency into Afghanistan, focusing their main effort in the eastern and southern regions, targeting both Afghan and international agencies and security forces. This surge in Taliban and Al Qaeda operations made 2006 the bloodiest period of the war

since 2002. The current Taliban and Al Qaeda insurgency is a direct challenge to NATO's and the US' efforts to stabilize Afghanistan and an overall threat to the future stability in the South Asian region.

This thesis will answer the following primary research question: Can counter insurgency operations be successful when the insurgents are operating from staging areas and safe havens in a neighboring state? The thesis concludes that in order to be successful against a cross border insurgency, the international community must assume a strategic approach encompassing all the instruments of national power. Prior to the application of the elements of the DIME, the counterinsurgent should conduct a thorough historical and cultural analysis in order to fully comprehend the region in which operations are going to be executed. Once counterinsurgency operations have commenced, progress must appear immediately, especially with regards to issues such as: security, poverty, medical care and unemployment. Finally, cohesion and persistence on the COIN part are crucial. Once engaged in the COIN fight, the international community must stay the course. Incessant political debates regarding extraction, limitation of forces and national caveats only serve the purpose of the insurgency.

#### Delimitations:

The main part of the analysis will be restricted to Afghanistan and Pakistan and how, if possible, the Taliban and Al Qaeda cross border insurgency from the permissive tribal areas of Western Pakistan into Afghanistan can be countered. Other similar cases will be used mainly as background. The research will focus on tribal, ethnic, military, political and economic structures amongst the players in this particular region as well as the current COIN strategy applied.

### Limitations:

This paper is limited with respect to access to military sources, as these are limited to open sources. Furthermore, there is limited access ability to independent sources with significant knowledge of the insurgent's "point of view."

### Key terms:

Al Qaeda:<sup>6</sup> "The base". An international terrorist organization founded in the late 1980s, by Osama bin Laden and Muhammad Atef, al-Qaeda calls for the use of violence and force in bringing about the end of non-Islamic governments and, in particular, a wish to drive the US armed forces out of Saudi Arabia and Somalia. Establishing training camps in areas such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kenya and Saudi Arabia, al-Qaeda is responsible for the proliferating of terrorists throughout the world, and providing them with military equipment and financing. Following the American-led military intervention in Afghanistan, the political infrastructure of the pro-al-Qaeda Taliban movement was virtually destroyed and a new government was established in Kabul. Al-Qaeda's military infrastructure in Afghanistan was destroyed but US officials believe the terrorist network has reconstituted itself in Pakistan, with more than 3,500 al-Qaeda fighters believed to be hiding throughout Pakistan's cities and border areas. In addition, the terror network has cells worldwide. US officials also believe that a group of mid-level al-Qaeda operatives has assumed a more prominent role in the organization and is working alongside Middle Eastern extremists across the Islamic world.

Counter insurgency:<sup>7</sup> Action taken against a group of people who are trying to take control of a country by force.

Inter Service Intelligence Agency:<sup>8</sup> The Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) is founded in 1948 by a British army officer, Maj Gen R Cawthome, then Deputy Chief of Staff in Pakistan Army. Field Marshal Ayub Khan, the president of Pakistan in the 1950s, expanded the role of ISI in safeguarding Pakistan's interests, monitoring opposition politicians, and sustaining military rule in Pakistan. The ISI is tasked with collection of foreign and domestic intelligence; co-ordination of intelligence functions of the three military services; surveillance over its cadre, foreigners, the media, politically active segments of Pakistani society, diplomats of other countries accredited to Pakistan and Pakistani diplomats serving outside the country; the interception and monitoring of communications; and the conduct of covert offensive operations.

Critics of the ISI say that it has become a state within a state, answerable neither to the leadership of the army, nor to the President or the Prime Minister. The result is there has been no real supervision of the ISI, and corruption, narcotics, and big money has all come into play, further complicating the political scenario. Drug money is used by ISI to finance not only the Afghanistan war, but also the ongoing proxy war against India in Kashmir and Northeast India.

Insurgency:<sup>9</sup> An insurgency is an organized, armed political struggle whose goal may be the seizure of power through revolutionary takeover and replacement of the existing government. In some cases, however, an insurgency's goals may be more limited.

Jihad:<sup>10</sup> Jihad usually refers to the struggle to evolve as a human being, to better your self, while the lower jihad is known as the literal fighting in the cause of god. In broader usage and interpretation, the term has accrued both violent and non-violent

meanings. It can refer to striving to live a moral and virtuous life, to spreading and defending Islam, and to fighting injustice and oppression, among other usages. Jihad is also used in the meaning of struggle for or defense of Islam. The primary aim of jihad is not the conversion of non-Muslims to Islam by force, but rather the expansion and defense of the Islamic state.

Pahstun:<sup>11</sup> Pashtuns (also Pathans or ethnic Afghans) is an ethno-linguistic group with populations primarily in eastern and southern Afghanistan and in the North-West Frontier Province, Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Baluchistan provinces of Pakistan. The Pashtuns are typically characterized by their Pashto language and adherence to both Pashtunwali (a pre-Islamic indigenous religious code of honor and culture) and Islam. The Ethnic group inhabits south-eastern Afghanistan and the western region of Pakistan.

Pashtunawali:<sup>12</sup> This is an ancient feudal tribal “code of honor,” which belongs to the Central Asian landscape peculiar to Afghanistan and is still much in force in that area. Pashtunwali is an unwritten, democratic, socio-political culture, law and ideology of the Pashtun society inherited from their forefathers and carried on to the present generation. It is a dominant force of Pashtun culture and identity.

Staging area:<sup>13</sup> A staging area is a location where people, vehicles, equipment or material are assembled prior to their use. Unlike normal bases, the facilities of a staging area are temporary, mainly because for a certain time, it will hold much more troops and material than would be reasonable in peacetime.

Taliban:<sup>14</sup> The Taliban are one of the mujahedeen (“holy warriors” or “freedom fighters”) groups that formed during the war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan

(1979-89). After the withdrawal of Soviet forces, the Soviet-backed government lost ground to the mujahedeen. In 1992, Kabul was captured and an alliance of mujahedeen set up a new government with Burhanuddin Rabbani as interim president. However, the various factions were unable to cooperate and fell to fighting each other. Afghanistan was reduced to a collection of territories held by competing warlords. Groups of Taliban (“religious students”) were loosely organized on a regional basis during the occupation and civil war. Although they represented a potentially huge force, they didn’t emerge as a united entity until the Taliban of Kandahar made their move in 1994. In late 1994, a group of well-trained Taliban was chosen by Pakistan to protect a convoy trying to open a trade route from Pakistan to Central Asia. They proved an able force, fighting off rival mujahedeen and warlords. The Taliban then went on to take the city of Kandahar, beginning a surprising advance that ended with their capture of Kabul in September of 1996.

Tribe:<sup>15</sup> A tribe viewed historically or developmentally, consists of a social group existing before the development of, or outside of, states, though some modern theorists hold that contemporary tribes can only be understood in terms of their relationship to states. The term is often loosely used to refer to any non-Western or indigenous society.

The next chapter presents the literature review. Chapter Three will present an overview of the methodology used in the thesis. Chapter Four and Five entail case studies from the insurgencies in Oman and Kashmir and the lessons learned from these insurgencies. Chapter Six will examine a case study of the current COIN operations in Afghanistan focused around the role of the tribal areas in Western Pakistan. Finally

Chapter Seven draws a comparison between the three case studies followed by the thesis conclusion and recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> IRA, *From IRA Warrior to Democrat*, available at <http://www.irishdemocrat.co.uk/book-reviews/cahill-biog/>, (accessed on 05 June 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Lester Grau, *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*, June 1995, Quantico, Virginia.

<sup>3</sup> US Senate Republican Policy Committee 31 March 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Pakistan, *Tribal Areas*, available at <http://www.cooperativeresearch.org/context>, (accessed on 02 May 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Barnett, Rubin R., *Resolving the Pakistan-Afghanistan stalemate*, Washington DC, October 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Definition, *Al Qaeda*, available at <http://www.answers.com/topic/al-qaeda>, (accessed on 12 June 2007).

<sup>7</sup> Definition, *Counterinsurgency*, Oxford University Press available at <http://www.oup.com>, (accessed on 02 June 2007).

<sup>8</sup> Definition, *Pakistani ISI*, available at <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/pakistan/isi/>, (accessed on 02 June 2007).

<sup>9</sup> Definition, *Insurgency*, available at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1991/NEN.htm>, (accessed on 14 June 2007).

<sup>10</sup> Definition, *Jihad*, available at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1991/NEN.htm>, (accessed on 14 June 2007).

<sup>11</sup> Definition, *Taliban*, Oxford University Press available at <http://www.oup.com>, (accessed on 12 June 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Definition, *Pashtunwali*, Oxford University Press available at <http://www.oup.com>, (accessed on 12 June 2007).

<sup>13</sup> Definition, *Staging Area*, Oxford University Press available at <http://www.oup.com>, (accessed on 12 June 2007).

<sup>14</sup>Laura Hayes and Borgna Brunner , *Taliban*, available at <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/taliban.html>., (accessed on 12 June 2007).

<sup>15</sup> Definition, *Tribe*, Oxford University Press, available at <http://www.oup.com>., (accessed on 12 June 2007).



## CHAPTER 2

### Litteratue Review

*Broadly speaking, Pakistan knows where Al Qaeda and the Taliban are.  
Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Indian Prime minister*

This chapter will provide an overview of the books, periodicals, articles, government documents, electronically and other sources, which have been applied in the research. The individual sources focus on the areas of methodology, Oman, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Government documents. Finally, other sources such as various WebPages with general impact on the thesis have been arranged in individual order. The first area of methodology sources provides insight into the sources from which the methodology is developed. The methodology is discussed in depth in the following chapter. The following section of the literature review discusses the sources related to the three case studies. This part of the literature review largely focuses on the basic sources which form the foundation for the case studies. Government documents are focused around the US manuals and Congressional Research Reports. The other sources section discusses additional reports and WebPages which are utilized

### Methodology

Stephen Van Evera's "*Guide to methods for students of political science*" provides the framework for the case studies on Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan. This source entails an in depth discussion of case studies and how they are best applied in reaching different objectives. The theory testing format applied in this thesis is described further in the following chapter on the thesis methodology.

Paul Collier and Nicolas Sambanis's "*Understanding Civil War, evidence and analysis*" provides the major part of the theoretical foundation for the methodology applied in analyzing the case studies in chapter's four, five and six of this thesis. This source builds on an economically and resource founded model originally used to analyze the onset of Civil wars. Through an extensive research into numerous Civil Wars over the past decades, the importance of researching resources and economic variables is substantiated. This source provides a complete model; however, this model is not regarded suitable in its natural form, which is why it has been adjusted accordingly. The model is originally developed by Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler and is referred to as the CH model throughout the thesis. The CH model is further discussed in the following chapter.

Bard O'Neil's "*Insurgency and terrorism*" provides a significant insight into the fundamentals of insurgency. The analysis of insurgency, through the use of numerous different factors and their interrelationships, supported by an extensive use of examples, has equipped the reader with a toolbox of ideas to conduct further research. Furthermore, this source has provided an understanding of the complexity of COIN operations. Finally, this source emphasizes the dissimilarity there is/can be in the various insurgencies, underlining a broad approach to any analysis on the topic. This source has provided the framework for analyzing the insurgency and COIN variables in the case studies of Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan.

David Galula's "*Counterinsurgency Warfare*" provides a good overview of the various mechanisms that drives insurgencies and through historic examples portrays different insurgencies and COIN. A very significant issue with regards to Galula is the

fact that he has gained much of his knowledge from his own experiences on the battlefield. The source covers the prerequisites for an insurgency and also the important issues which will have to be dealt with by the COIN forces. The insurgency doctrine is covered in detail and subsequently general COIN courses of action are presented. The most important extracts from this source is believed to be the “laws of Counterinsurgency,” where Galula argues that the counterinsurgent can not use the tactics of the insurgent and that the COIN focus must be on gaining and maintaining support from the population.

### Oman

John Newsinger’s “*British counterinsurgency – from Palestine to Northern Ireland*” provides very detailed descriptions of the military operations including the build up and preparation phases in connection with combat operations. The focal points covers the commitment of the British Special Air Service (SAS) as advisors to the Sultans Armed Forces (SAF) in Oman and their experiences as such. More so, this source examines the Oman conflict in detail, which in general is believed to be a model for counterinsurgency operations.

Thomas R. Mockaitis’s “*British counterinsurgency in the post imperial era*” provides an overview of the British COIN operations in Oman. The demanding task of winning the hearts and minds of the Omani people is described in detail. The issues covered in this source will predominantly be used with regards to identifying how to counter the insurgencies and subsequently be successful at it, especially the importance of having cross ethnic legitimacy, in this case, western and Arab forces conducting COIN operations along side each other.

Tony Jeapes's "*SAS: Operation OMAN*" provides essential and very detailed information to this thesis with regards to the COIN effort in Oman. Especially the detailed discussions of the establishment of the physical barriers in southern Dhofar provides invaluable information with regards to better understand the success of the COIN effort. Furthermore, this source discusses some rather interesting observations in relation to the importance of understanding the history, culture and rule of law when conducting COIN as a foreign power.

John Akehurst's "*We won a war*" discuss in detail the distinct combat operations carried out in the Dhofar region of Oman. This source furthermore entails a very informative part on the Omani history and the history of events leading to the 1960 – 1970 insurgency. Finally, this source provides insight into the coordinated application of the instruments of national power as well as the importance of abiding by local tribal laws and traditions when conducting COIN Operations.

### Kashmir

K. Santhanam's *Jihadis in Jammu and Kashmir* identifies a significant number of insurgent groups operating in Kashmir, including supporting groups in Pakistan. It provides an idea of the problems related to identifying the goals of the insurgent groups operating in the area. In this thesis, it provides significant material in terms of understanding how to militarily and political to deal with an insurgency once it is in effect.

Eric S. Margolis's "*War at the top of the world*" contributes significantly to the Kashmir case study through a very detailed regional and historical approach. Margolis provides first hand information which ties the situations in Afghanistan and Kashmir.

Margolis provides important information from the Line of Control separating Pakistan Administered Kashmir (PAK) and Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK) through first hand reports from visits on both sides of the border. This source significantly contributes to the background, insurgency and COIN variables of the Kashmir case study.

### Afghanistan

Victoria Schofield's *Afghan Frontier: Feuding and fighting in Afghanistan* covers a tremendous period of time and has provided some excellent maps and sketches. It discusses in detail the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and provides the reader with an insight into the way that the FATA is governed. This source is very important with regards to issues of tribal and ethnic bonding and the implications these issues may present on providing safe havens for insurgents.

Stephen Tanner's *Afghanistan: A military history from Alexander the Great to the fall of the Taliban* provides useful historic background on Afghanistan and more importantly essential information in understanding the ethnic and tribal mechanisms of that particular region as a whole. The book examines in detail the wars against the British in the 1800s as well as the war against the Soviets in the 1980s. This source predominantly provides tribal related historical material to the thesis.

Mariam Abou Zahab and Oliver Roy's *Islamist Networks, the Afghan-Pakistan connection* displays some of the ties between Taliban, the Pakistani military leadership and other Pakistani Islamic organizations and madras'. It provides very good material with regards to the various active movements in the region advocating the establishment of a Caliphate. In general, broad insight into the similarities and the differences of the

religious movements in the region is provided. This source is particularly valuable in terms of understanding the ethnic and religious mechanisms within the FATA.

Robert I. Rotberg's "*Building a new Afghanistan*" discuss a series of very interesting topics ranging from the lack of cultural understanding by the foreign players in Afghanistan to economy and governmental issues, all regarded relevant to the case study. However, this source particularly provides interesting information with regards to the issues surrounding decentralized and centralized power in Afghanistan and pertinent points related to the decentralization issue are brought forward.

#### Government Documents.

COIN operations and insurgencies have naturally become popular topics to research, why a significant number of government documents exist. Some of these are identified as relevant sources in connection with this thesis. Primarily sources such as monographs or theses written by former Command and General Staff College (CGSC) and School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) students, the FM 3-24 US Field Manual on COIN and a number of Congressional reports and special reports on especially Afghanistan and Pakistan are used as sources. These sources typically cover a number of the variables investigated in the three case studies, analyzed in the following chapters.

#### Other Sources.

In general, there are a significant use of information gathered from the various news media's. The utilization of periodicals and articles is extensive. During the course of research, there has been a rather significant interest in covering the region between

Afghanistan and Pakistan. They primarily deal with the issues along the above border and not so much the general question as posed as this thesis primary research question. The objectivity of these sources can at times be regarded questionable; especially as the information is not always substantiated and independently confirmed before being published. However, the question of objectivity is regarded a matter of fact and a natural situation when reporting from areas with ongoing combat.

During the course of this research, a number of internet sources are used. Initially, a significant amount of background information has been gathered through *Janes Security Sentinel*. Furthermore, various departmental and agency WebPages, such as the US Department of State and the Central intelligence Agency (CIA) provide a certain amount of primarily background information. Also research focused WebPages such as the Strategic Issues Research Institute (SIRI – US) provides information directly related to the research questions. BBC World covers a significant amount of information especially with regards to maps, graphs and other historical material. Furthermore, the BBC World provides recent information especially on the Afghanistan case study.

At this point in time, the opportunity to attend a briefing regarding the FATA in Pakistan, conducted by a very resourceful individual with a great deal of both first and second hand knowledge and experiences from this particular region has materialized.<sup>1</sup> This particular briefing covers a series of issues with implications for both the Pakistani approach to the situation within the FATA and the international community's approach to that particular region. The Pakistani National Security Strategy, the relations to India, the tribal laws applied within the FATA, the lack of the central government influence within the FATA and the Pakistani perception of this entire region forming the border with

Afghanistan are some of the more important issues brought forward in this briefing. The information gathered during this briefing is regarded of significant value especially as it provides the author with both valuable background knowledge and information directly transferable to the Afghanistan case study.

The following chapter provides an overview of the methodology used in this thesis. A thorough description of the case study model and the theories applied through the different variables when analyzing the insurgencies in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan is provided.

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<sup>1</sup>Briefing by COL Thomas P. Wilhelm, *FATA's*, conducted on 30 MAR. 2007, at School of Advanced Military Studies, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, USA.



## CHAPTER 3

### Methodology

*Eliminating the safe haven that the Taliban and other extremists have found in Pakistan's tribal areas is not sufficient to end the insurgency in Afghanistan, but necessary.*

*John Negroponte, Director National Intelligence*

This chapter provides an overview of the case study model<sup>1</sup> used to analyze the counterinsurgencies in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan. The model and the theories applied in this thesis will be described generically as they will be applied to each of the insurgencies in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan in an attempt to identify factors which will ultimately provide answers to the primary research question: Can COIN operations be successful when the insurgents are operating from safe havens and staging areas in neighboring states? The theory is that the cross border insurgencies will succeed and ultimately prevail if the COIN effort does not attend to the issue properly.

The insurgencies in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan have been picked for different reasons. The Oman case study is interesting in that in this case, the COIN effort succeeded in defeating a cross border insurgency. The Kashmir insurgency is of interest to this thesis partly because it has been going on for a significant number of years, partly because it is believed that the major reason for the insurgency still being active is the cross border support received from Pakistan Administered Kashmir (PAK). Finally, the Afghan case study which is the main effort is of particular interest as it deals with the first ever out of theatre operation for NATO.

To date, a significant amount of written works investigating various insurgencies has utilized theories by either Bard O'Neil or David Galula as general framework for the

analysis. Although they are both identified as feasible, they are found to focus heavily on the violent aspects of the specific insurgency as opposed to the various structural factors causing it. The case study format applied in this thesis is “process tracing”<sup>2</sup> which tests both the violence focused theory of Bard O’Neil<sup>3</sup> as well as the economic founded theory of Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler through the analysis of a number of variables.

The structural factors are derived from a formal economic approach developed by Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler<sup>4</sup> which was originally designed to determine the onset of civil war.<sup>5</sup> From now on this theory will be referred to as the CH-model. This model has been regarded especially bold by many as it predicts the major reason for outbreak of civil war as being weak economic indicators rather than repression or grievances<sup>6</sup>. The refined CH-model consists of a number of variables<sup>7</sup>; GDP per capita, growth, education, natural resources, population, Diasporas, political institutions, ethnicity, social fragmentation and polarization and escalation dynamics. During the course of investigating the three insurgencies it has become clear that the adjustments to the initial model would be appropriate, mainly because of specific issues depicted in the insurgencies in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan and the lack of information availability. Therefore, in order to better conduct a thorough analysis of the insurgencies in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan, a further adaptation of the model has been conducted.<sup>8</sup> The GDP per capita, growth, education and natural resources variables are replaced by an economic variable and additionally geographic and demographic variables are investigated.

Finally, an examination of the insurgencies and the strategies of the respective counterinsurgencies in lieu of Bard O’Neil’s theory are examined in order to better

determine differences or similarities between the three case studies. The adjustments to the CH theory and the combination of variables from CH and Bard O'Neil are ultimately believed to enhance the validity of the thesis analysis, conclusions and recommendations.

In order to set the conditions for the analysis, each case study provides a short background paragraph describing pertinent events in history which are believed to have led to the insurgency in question. An historical examination provides insight into the population's legacy and set the conditions for a further understanding of the actual mind set of the populations before, during and after the insurgency materializes. The background paragraph is followed by a discussion of the eight variables: Geography, Demographics, Ethnicity and cross border ethnicity, Economy, Governmental institutions, External support, Insurgency strategy, COIN strategy.

#### First Variable: Geography

Several analysts investigating insurgencies emphasizes the importance of the geographical factors.<sup>9</sup> Crucial geographical factors, such as urban areas, rivers, mountains, agricultural areas, as well as infrastructural key issues, such as transportation networks and communication availability, are examined in order to provide a better understanding of the physical challenges the parties involved faces on both the insurgent and COIN side.

#### Second Variable: Demographics

Investigating the demographics of the insurgencies in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan provides an overview of possible similarities or differences with regards to

population size, growth, density and distribution. Furthermore, it is expected to depict areas of focus for the counterinsurgent.

### Third Variable: Ethnicity and Cross Border Ethnicity

Several recent wars and insurgencies have been fought where ethnic character background and/or affiliation has been one of the most important factors.<sup>10</sup> Therefore an examination of the ethnicity is conducted in an attempt to determine the possible implications on the insurgency. One of the factors not believed to have gained much interest in recent studies is the cross border ethnic communities and the implications of these. An investigation into the magnitude of these communities, how they are structured and what rules and laws they abide by is one of the most important of the variables examined in this thesis. This investigation is expected to depict the mental and physical strength and line of thought of the communities from where the insurgents may derive their most crucial support.

### Fourth Variable: Economy

This variable is one of the cornerstones in the basic CH-model of analysis as it is alleged that civil wars and related violence is more likely to be conducted in poor countries,<sup>11</sup> especially poor countries with some form of accessible but not well exploited natural resources. An examination of the growth and available natural resources are carried out as well as a closer look at possible shadow economies in the areas of the insurgency. The analysis is expected to reveal the importance of employment and the significant impact of poverty.

#### Fifth Variable: Governmental Institutions

This variable attempts to depict the governmental approach to the insurgencies in terms of both violent and non violent means. The issue of providing personal safety for the individual inhabitant is deemed particularly important as it builds trust and legitimacy with regards to governmental institutions and actions. Furthermore, an examination of the institutional credibility with regards to corruption, amnesties for politicians known not to have caused citizen hardship will depict the routines, efficiency of the government as a whole. The legitimacy issue of the governments is extremely important and is often identified as the centre of gravity for the COIN effort. Finally a discussion of the centralized government as a legitimate and long lasting solution in regions where decentralization is deeply engraved in the societies is conducted. This variable depicts whether or not the issue of governance is approached appropriately and in accordance with any pertinent historical facts in effect in the particular region.

#### Sixth Variable: External Support

In all of the insurgencies that are analyzed in this thesis, external influence is playing a significant part both with regards to support of the insurgents and the counterinsurgents. In order to gain a better understanding of the magnitude and importance of the external influence, an examination of direct and indirect support is conducted. Finally this investigation depicts how best to diminish the efficiency of external influence on the insurgency and exploit the external influence on the counterinsurgent side.

### Seventh Variable: The Insurgency Strategy

In order to discuss any similarities or differences between the three insurgencies, an examination of a series of insurgency related factors is carried out. Determining the history and overall strategy and goals of the insurgency, the organization, the modus operandi of the insurgency and the populace support will all focus at the same end state – the ability to better understand how the insurgency works, how it is supported and how it maintains significant recruitment levels. This analysis leads to a better and broader understanding of the opponent and therefore also identifies possible avenues of exploitation for the counterinsurgency.

### Eight variable: Counterinsurgency Strategy

In order to determine whether or not the COIN strategy is successful, an analysis of the COIN approach is conducted. This discussion focuses around the Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economical instruments of national power and reveals both successes and shortfalls of the COIN strategy.

The following three chapters provide the analysis part of this thesis, beginning with the insurgency in Oman, followed by Kashmir and finally with the insurgency in Afghanistan. In general, the three insurgencies confront the cross border insurgency issue. Oman has been selected as it is a good example on how to conduct a successful COIN; Kashmir as it has not been successful and finally, Afghanistan as it is a focal point for Western forces conducting COIN operations.

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<sup>1</sup> Steven van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, New York 1997, 56.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>3</sup> Bard o'Neil, *Insurgency and Terrorism*, Washington D.C., 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Collier and Nicolas Sambanis, *Evidence and Analysis, Understanding Civil War*, Washington 2005, 1.

<sup>5</sup> Later the theory has been further developed by Nicholas Sambanis with regards to adding context and texture.

<sup>6</sup> Nicholas Sambanis, *Using Case Studies to Expand the Theory of War*, May 2003, 19.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 19-34.

<sup>8</sup> Only limited information regarding the GDP per capita and growth exists with regards to Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan.

<sup>9</sup> Bard O'Neil, David Galula and the US FM 3-24 all touch upon the importance of this issue.

<sup>10</sup> Conflicts in Rwanda, Bosnia, and Kosovo were all fought in the shadow of ethnic diversity.

<sup>11</sup> Sambanis, 20-23.

## CHAPTER 4

### Oman Case Study

*These Taliban are coming from Pakistan. They get training for suicide attacks in Pakistan and then come to Afghanistan. We ask the Pakistani government to secure its border.*

*Asadullah Kahn, Governor of Kandahar province Afghanistan*

This chapter provides an analysis of the insurgency in Oman in order to determine the decisive factors in this successful COIN strategy. Initially, a brief historical overview set the conditions for further analysis, which is conducted in accordance with the methodology described in the previous chapter. First, a brief background and history paragraph followed by an analysis of the variables; geography, demographics, ethnicity and cross border ethnicity, economy, governmental institutions, external support, the insurgency strategy and finally the COIN strategy. The analysis provides decisive elements to the answer of the primary research question: Can counterinsurgency operations be successful, when the insurgents are operating from safe havens and staging areas in neighboring states?

The COIN fight in Oman proves successful due to a number of reasons. First of all, the insurgents fail to conduct a valid insurgency, convincing the population of the importance of the cause, thereby ensuring a base of support. The insurgents then change the goals, attempting to force the civilian populace to abide by Marxist ideology. Disregarding the tribal structures which forms the foundation of the Dhofar societies and applying brutal methods to the civilian populace in reality make it a question of when, rather than if the COIN effort succeeds.



Second, the lack of infrastructure and the complex terrain of the Dhofar mountain massif, are determining issues in the COIN success. Because of the complex terrain, the insurgency is physically containable which again enables the shutting down of external support from Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). Combined with the fact that the insurgents do not succeed in regionalizing the conflict through other means such as religion or ethnicity, further make the insurgency psychological containable. This containment is further aided by prohibiting the international media from entering Dhofar, hereby cutting the insurgent communications cord to the outside world.

Finally, the well planned and executed COIN strategy based on an integrated approach succeeds in combining military and civilian assets and objectives. The COIN at one time meet the needs of the populace and at the same time succeeds in militarily defeating the insurgency hereby executing the “Iron hand – velvet glove” strategy in an extremely efficient manner.



Figure 1. Oman

Source: Graphic maps, accessed on 30 October 2007, at <http://graphicmaps.com/webimage/countrys/asia/lcolor/omcolor.htm>

## Background

The country of Oman is situated on the southeast corner of the Arabian Peninsula, bordering PDRY to the south and Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates (UAE) to the West and the North and encompassing the strategic Strait of Hormuz.<sup>1</sup> Figure 1 refers. In the early 1800s, Oman becomes a British protectorate and British support almost immediately come into effect through the attempts to control the Imams who exercises enormous influence amongst the tribes situated in the central parts of the sultanate.<sup>2</sup> During the early decades of the 1900s the Imam of Oman expands his powerbase, thereby forcing the making of a treaty which provides autonomy to the central Nizwa region.<sup>3</sup> At this time, the Sultan was under extensive pressure to keep the sultanate from disintegrating.

The situation deteriorates up through the 1950s as the tribal leaders and Imams controlling the central part of the sultanate, aided by Saudi Arabia, attempts to create an independent state<sup>4</sup>. The violent clashes between sultanate forces, aided by the UK, and tribal supporters, subsequently lead to the tribesmen being driven out of Oman and south into Yemen. However, the reactionary Sultan who seems little interested in providing the basic needs for the people of Oman soon faces a growing communist commanded insurgency which grows stronger up through the 1960s.<sup>5</sup> The insurgency is initiated in the southern province of Dhofar, an area which in a variety of ways are different from the remainder of Oman.

Throughout the 1960s the fighting continues, leaving the government forces in control of only the coastal areas by 1970. Following a coup by the son of the reigning sultan, assisted by British Special Air Service (SAS) operators, in the summer of 1970,<sup>6</sup>

the situation turns from what looks like a question of time before the insurgents are in control of Oman, to a well executed counterinsurgency campaign. In 1975, the Popular Front for Liberation of Oman (PFLO) is defeated by the SAF and a coalition of British, Jordanian, Iranian and Baluchi forces and the insurgency ceases to exist. The following section examines the structural and process related factors in order to determine the deeper causes behind the insurgency in Oman and what eventually defeated it.

### Geography

The Sultanate of Oman is strategically located at the southeastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula. It had land borders to the north with the UAE (410 km), to the west with Saudi Arabia (676 km) and to the south with PDRY (288 km). Vegetation is limited to the higher and irrigated areas of the country as the climatologically conditions in the sultanate limits the availability of fresh water which is predominantly provided by wells.<sup>7</sup>

The Sultanate consists of two primary regions: the North East which encompasses a very fertile coastal region and the inland mountainous area.<sup>8</sup> The North East is further divided into two provinces, the Oman and Muscat provinces. By far, the greatest area of Oman is taken up by an extensive desert plain that covers most of the interior and stretched to the southeastern coastline. There is very little vegetation or water found on this plain. The southern extreme of Oman rises from the desert plain into the Dhofar Mountains along the southwestern coastline. These mountains are crossed by numerous Wadis (valleys)<sup>9</sup> and along the Dhofar coast is a narrow approximately thirty mile long plain, the Salalah plain. The Dhofar region experiences heavy surf during the monsoon season, which heavily restricts maritime operations.<sup>10</sup>

The Dhofar province shares an unspecified border stretch with PDRY and further has a very significant relatively deserted mountainous area, the Jebel Ahdar, stretching some 150 miles, from North of Salaleh all the way south to the PDRY border.<sup>11</sup> This limestone massif, about 20 miles wide and peaks well above the 3000 meters, has a fertile plateau at 2000 meters scattered with very small villages and with the possibility of producing crops. Furthermore several cave complexes are available at this plateau.<sup>12</sup> The non permissive features of the Jebel Ahkdar terrain are ideal for an insurgency, providing supplies of food and water, shelter for bombings in the cave complexes and finally leaving the insurgents with the opportunity of conducting relatively unhindered re-supply runs to and from the neighboring PDRY. Finally the province has only one road which runs through it, from north to south, making it relatively easy to control and to interdict the in and outgoing traffic, both for the insurgents and the counterinsurgents.

The weather in Dhofar, which year round produces temperatures around the 90 degrees Fahrenheit, has a significant impact during the summer monsoon from June to September. During this period of time, heavy cloud covers engulf the Jebali, thereby hindering the employment of helicopter and fixed wing operations. Furthermore, the thick clouds act as a cover for the insurgents supply caravans from the PDRY border.

### Demographics

A majority of the population of Oman is Arabs and more than 90 % of the population is Muslim. As in neighboring Arab countries, a significant number of foreigners make out the workforce in Oman. Of the approximately 1,5 million people who inhabits Oman around 1970, only around 30.000 live in the Dhofar province. The remainder of the population is focused at the North eastern coastal areas.<sup>13</sup> The Dhofar

inhabitants, also referred to as the Jebalis (mountainpeople), live of the land, providing for themselves through cattle herding and agriculture.<sup>14</sup>

### Ethnicity and Cross Border Ethnicity

In this specific conflict, the cross border issue is not a factor of significance. The individuals fighting the Dhofar war (1969-76) is the mountain people of the Dhofar region. These mountain people is ethnically distinct from the remainder of the Omani population situated in the NE parts of the Sultanate and does not really regard themselves as Omani, more as Dhofaris. Furthermore the mountain people adheres to the tribal laws practiced in the specific region which make it very easy for them to feel as Dhofars and not Omani. This feeling of being different from the Muscat based leadership is further intensified through Sultan Said's ill treatment of the Dhofaris, which again set the conditions for an insurgency.

The fact that there is no cross-border ethnicity make the insurgency containable, as no large groupings of ethnic related fractions operates out of any of the neighboring states and into Oman. The fact that the insurgency is containable is a decisive factor in the successful COIN fight. Finally, the absence of a cross border ethnic issue means that the insurgency is cut of from a recruitment base outside of the Dhofar region.

### Economy

The Omani economy develops significantly in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1960s, Oman's economy is based on agriculture and cattle herding. The discovery of oil in 1964 drastically changes the sultanate's economic status.<sup>15</sup> The Omani oil findings, which are primarily controlled by British Petroleum, provides Sultan Said with great opportunities

to improve the standard of living for the Omani people, i.e., through a review of the standing educational and health programs.<sup>16</sup> However, major improvements do not materialize and whatever limited developmental steps that are made; all take place in the NE part of Oman, which leaves especially the Jebalis in Dhofar with insufficient support within areas such as healthcare, education and veterinarian treatments.

The failure of Sultan Said to direct some of the oil revenues to the people of Oman only enhances the populace grievances, especially among the Dhofars, and in doing so, the foundation for the insurgency is made. This economic policy is well in line with the Sultans execution of absolute power, and it is basically founded in his aversion to modernization and western influence in general. However, after the coup in 1970, which allegedly is heavily influenced by the UK<sup>17</sup>, Sultan Qaboos immediately initiates extensive healthcare and education programs in Dhofar. These programs later proves to be vital parts of the overall COIN strategy which subsequently lead to the defeat of the Dhofar insurgents in 1975.<sup>18</sup>

The importance of the economic factor in fighting the Dhofar insurgency is significant. Initially the external interest and support in countering the insurgency are related to the geographical location of Oman and the recent discovered oil reserves. These oil findings are a decisive factor in making Oman important to the international community, both with regards to the UN and the Arab League. Oman's significance as well as the fear of strong regional communist influence has a positive effect on the willingness to provide external support to the counterinsurgency, a support which later proves to determine the outcome of the COIN fight. Finally, the revenue from the Omani oil reserves contributes heavily to the financing of the COIN strategy which entailes

expensive, health, educational, and veterinarian programs, all serving the purpose of winning hearts and minds.

### Governmental Institutions.

Sultan Said of Oman exercises absolute power. Absolute power places the Sultan as the executive, military, judicial and legislative authority within the Sultanate.<sup>19</sup> The Sultan has eliminated Oman's council of ministers and instead establishes a number of departments, notably without a department of foreign affairs or external issues, which is well in line with the Sultan's desire to shield against any foreign interference in Omani affairs.<sup>20</sup> As the Omani are predominantly Muslim, justice within the Sultanate is based on Sharia law. Until the oil exploitation commences in the late 1950s, the Sultan basically only rules the NE region of Oman with the rest of the sultanate left to tribal ruling. In the late 1950s the British and not Sultan Said, recognizes the need for securing the central part of Oman and the oil fields, in order to counter the creation of an independent state within the current borders of Oman.

Tribal laws and Imams rule the central and southwestern areas of Oman and from the mid 1950s and onward, there is constant friction between the Imams and tribes on one side and Sultan Said on the other. Initially, the Sultan gains control of the interior greatly assisted by the British;<sup>21</sup> however, tribal leaders and Imams avoids capture and seek refuge in neighboring Saudi Arabia, enabling them to reorganize and re-assume the fight in the beginning of the 1960s.

When Sultan Said is removed from power in 1970, changes come to the governmental apparatus.<sup>22</sup> Sultan Qaboos re-instates the council of ministers and take the opportunity to expand the council to encompass ministers of education, health, justice,

information, labor and economy,<sup>23</sup> thereby setting the conditions for the government to handle the tasks about to appear in connection with the COIN fight.

### External Support

External support proves to be a decisive factor for both the insurgency and the counterinsurgency. Until the surfacing of the PDRY, the Dhofar insurgency only receives very limited external support. However, this situation dramatically changes in 1967 upon the UK being expelled from the PDRY<sup>24</sup>. The PDRY immediately provides a safe haven for the Dhofar Liberation Front (DLF), enabling the insurgents to safely use PDRY soil to regroup, conduct training of its members and launch attacks into Oman. Apart from facilitating training of the insurgents, the PDRY also provides the DLF with a wide range of modern weaponry, such as 81 and 82 mm mortars, RPG's, AK 47's and recoilless rifles. This new and significant external support has a major impact on the effectiveness of the insurgency operations; although it also causes a significant increase in external support of the counterinsurgency.

Up until 1970, external support for the Omani government has been very limited simply due to the fact that Sultan Said does not believe in foreign interference in internal Omani issues. Immediately after the 1970 coup, UK forms the approximately 600 man strong British Army Training Team (BATT) and dispatches a Special Air Service team into the Dhofar region in order to gain intelligence and produce a workable COIN plan.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore the SAS, through their advisor role, undertakes the task of standing up capable Omani combat units to join the fight in Dhofar.<sup>26</sup> Besides providing advisors to the SAF, UK also deploys elements of the Royal Air Force to the Arabian Peninsula,



primarily in a close air support role to support ground operations. Finally, the deployment of UK helicopter assets further enhances the capabilities of the SAF and the BATT.

The UK is not alone in supporting Sultan Qaboos. The international Dhofar Brigade, numbering some 10000 men, is made up by Jordanians, Iranians, Omani, Britons and Baluchis. The Iranian contribution, which commences operations in theater in 1973, numbers approximately 1500 - 2500 men, one combat brigade, supported by attack aircrafts and a helicopter support element. The Jordanians provides one combat battalion to the brigade which numbers approximately 600 men and along with the UAE, Jordan provides smaller ground elements which carries out security tasks in Northern Oman, hereby enabling Omani forces to deploy to Dhofar.<sup>27</sup> Oman further receives substantial financial support from both UAE and Saudi Arabia which is essential in relation to the execution of the significant healthcare and educational programs in Dhofar.<sup>28</sup>

The Arab and Persian contributions to Oman are extremely important in that they provides legitimacy in terms of an Arab and international flavor to the fight. In doing so, any imperialistic accusations from the international community against the UK are minimized. Finally, the most important political support to the new ruler of Oman and the fight against the insurgency appears in 1971, when the sultanate is officially admitted to the UN and the Arab League.<sup>29</sup> This international recognition of the sultanate paves the way for making the COIN effort a regional fight against communism and hereby enhances the interest among the Arab neighbors for providing support to Oman.

### Insurgency Strategy

The Dhofar insurgency is divided into two overall periods of time, the first period of the insurgency from 1963- 1967 and the second period of the insurgency from 1967 – 1975. The first period is when the DLF is the primary player in the insurgency, during which the insurgency is driven on internal support only. The second period witnesses the active involvement from the PDRY and during this time the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf ((PFLOAG) is the primary player.

The insurgency is bred by the mountain people of the Dhofar Mountains. The mountain people feels that the ruler, Sultan Said, favors the development of the North eastern part of the country, leaving the Dhofar region short of medical treatment, education opportunities and other necessities.<sup>30</sup> The motivation for the mountain people is independence from the sultanate, a profound desire to modernize the Dhofar region and continue to abide by the traditional tribal laws and structures.<sup>31</sup>

The Dhofar region is in many respects very well suited for the DLF insurgency.<sup>32</sup> The insurgency is operating at its home turf, with the non permissive terrain of the Dhofar Mountains as the main area of operations (AO). The terrain heavily restricts counterinsurgency operations carried out by the poorly equipped SAF and these conditions are further worsened during the monsoon period from June to September. The majority of the DLF activity is focused on minor guerilla operations, such as ambushes and sabotage. This limited effort is due to both the limited extent of the Dhofar Mountains itself and the limited external support. Because of these factors, the conflict is contained and remains more or less an internal Omani problem. The internal and limited

nature of the insurgency causes only relatively minor violent clashes which again keeps the casualty level at a low.

The DLF never succeeds in gaining the sufficient support in the Dhofar populace to ignite an uprising in the region which again can lead to a satisfactory level of independence from the Muscat based government. The reason for this lack of popular support is the failure of recognizing that the people of Dhofar is the center of gravity and on the same note failing to convince them of the importance of the DLF cause. Therefore as 1967 came to an end, the insurgents are in control of the Dhofar mountains whilst SAF controls the surrounding lowlands. Neither part capable of mounting any large decisive actions against the other.

The second period of the insurgency commenced in 1967 when the PDRY was formed which immediately affects the Omani insurgency.<sup>33</sup> The DLF renames itself to PFLOAG. The PFLOAG objectives go far beyond than those of the DLF; an overthrow of the ruling sultan followed by the establishment of a Marxist founded government. By some individuals in neighboring PDRY, the Oman insurgency is regarded the first step in the liberation of the Arabian Peninsula, the objective being regional nationalism.<sup>34</sup> This new Marxist founded insurgency, which numbers around 2000 fighting guerillas supported by a part time militia of approximately 3-4000 personnel initially is very successful and by 1970-1971 rules the majority of the Dhofar region.<sup>35</sup> The insurgency in large keeps conducting small scale night time guerilla attacks through ambushes, mortar attacks and mine laying operations.<sup>36</sup>

Despite this initial success, primarily due to increased external support from the PDRY, the insurgents continue to neglect the crucial factor of popular support for their

cause. The PFLOAG leadership distances themselves from the tribal values of the Dhofars, and attempts to replace these values with Marxism. This attempt to change the basic values on which the Dhofar identity is founded is not very well received throughout the region. In order to have the populace fall in with the ideas of Marxism, the PFLOAG enforces very violent methods such as burning out eyes of the elders in public, beatings, murder and rape.<sup>37</sup> The very distinct change of objective from an internal Dhofari issue to an ideological fight for regional Marxism causes a crucial loss of popular support, it even causes former insurgents to shift side and join the fight against the PFLOAG<sup>38</sup>. Finally, the brutal actions against the civilian populace alienate the insurgents from the population to such a degree that the PFLOAG basically set the conditions for its own failure.

#### COIN Strategy

The following paragraph provides an analysis of the COIN strategy of the Omani sultanate. The analysis focuses on the Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic instruments of national power and covers both the period of Sultan Said (1963-1970) and the period of Sultan Qaboos (1970-1975); however, it is focused on the latter.

During Sultan Said's ruling, the diplomatic instrument of national power is only brought into play on occasions where the Sultan seek to turn the Dhofar tribes against one another in order to ascertain sultanate control of the Dhofar region.<sup>39</sup> The military instrument of power, however, is the core of Sultan Said's COIN strategy. At that time, the SAF consists of two battalions of ground troops supported by a small number of DC-3 aircrafts.<sup>40</sup> The Omani forces are neither well trained nor sufficiently equipped to undertake the task of fighting the Dhofaris. More importantly, the military strategy is one of extreme violence against the civilian population, as the SAF burns down and bombs

the villages. This violent approach only serves to alienate a significant part of the Dhofar population and subsequently drove them into the arms of the Marxist insurgency. As a result, the insurgents are basically in control of the greater part of Dhofar at the end of 1970, leaving the SAF in control of a minor coastal strip.

Upon assuming power, Sultan Qaboos soon realizes that the approach to the insurgency has to be changed drastically in order for the sultanate to survive. Sultan Qaboos strategy, which is drafted in cooperation with the UK, is in place before the actual coup is carried out<sup>41</sup>. This new COIN strategy, focuses around medical aid for the Jebalis, a veterinary campaign, provision of wells, comprehensive intelligence gathering and psychological operations aimed at persuading the rebels to change side. The strategy approaches the insurgency through the application of the diplomatic, informational, military and economic instruments of national power<sup>42</sup>. The diplomatic instrument of national power is used when Sultan Qaboos applies for membership of both the UN and the Arab league resulting in Omani admittance into both organizations by the end of 1971. With Oman achieving membership of both the UN and the Arab league, Sultan Qaboos succeeds in obtaining legitimacy of the current Omani leadership to the neighboring countries and to the people of Oman and also conveys the message of secession of Omani isolationism. Finally, Sultan Qaboos successfully turns the COIN effort into an Islamic fight for survival against communism hereby securing substantial regional support.<sup>43</sup>

The informational instrument of national power, heavily assisted by new technology, is an important part of the COIN strategy. Sultan Qaboos, heavily advised by the UK, soon realizes the power of a well planned information campaign. The means by

which the campaign is launched are leaflets and radio.<sup>44</sup> Transistor radios are distributed throughout the Dhofar region, enabling the population to follow the news on radio Oman. The purposes of the then modern radio Oman are to provide news and updates about people in the sultanate, provide government announcements, give news of important events in the Gulf region and from around the world and to gain a widespread audience.<sup>45</sup>

The Sultanate wisely makes use of intelligence provided by defecting insurgents, who reports of the brutal methods applied by the Marxist insurgents toward the civilians in the Dhofar Mountains. The information campaign is subsequently built around the subject of Holy war waged against the Marxist founded insurgency through the government slogan of “Islam is our way, freedom is our aim”<sup>46</sup> By emphasizing the Holy war issue, the COIN fight becomes of regional interest, later materialized in Arab forces taking active part in the COIN efforts.

Furthermore, the population of Dhofar is informed of the good life to come especially with regards to healthcare, security, education and jobs.<sup>47</sup> In an attempt to persuade the insurgents to change sides, radio transmissions and leaflets are used to inform of amnesty and cash incentives and as a result approximately 10 % of the active insurgents surrenders during the first six months after Sultan Qaboos assumed power.<sup>48</sup> As the COIN fight progresses, the Omani communications network undergoes tremendous development. Radio and TV stations in Muscat and Salalah are established, telephones, newspapers and magazines becomes available to the population.<sup>49</sup> Whilst the Omani media develops a decision of significant importance is made; the international news media are banned from entering the Dhofar region, hereby preventing the insurgents from exploiting the opportunity to use them as a propaganda base.<sup>50</sup>

The military instrument of national power is executed through the employment of selective force, referred to by as “an iron hand in a velvet glove.” The military element of the COIN strategy is relatively simple, initially focusing on building the right force and next employ it to the Dhofar region in order to execute operations containing the insurgency, basically cutting the cord to the outside world, in effect, to PDRY. The initial build up of the Omani forces is focused partly around re-equipping and re-training the current SAF, secondly around the standing up of the Civil Action Teams (CAT) and the Firqats.<sup>51</sup> The CATs are built around the SAS augmented by other specialties such as engineers, local advisors and government representatives. The firqats are unit’s made up of former Dhofari insurgents who have chosen to change sides.<sup>52</sup> They are organized as combat units, formed around SAS teams of 4-6 men and vary in size from platoon to company level.<sup>53</sup> The utilization of local tribesmen within these firqats provides the COIN forces with valuable intelligence and often a former insurgent would turn himself over to the SAS/SAF and immediately direct them to the insurgent base.

The military part of the COIN strategy developed by the BATT and Sultan Qaboos is relatively simple; CATs and firqats would enter the tribal areas in the Dhofar Mountains, conduct hearts and minds operations, basically attacking insurgent positions and bases and immediately transition into providing medical aid and water for the local populace.<sup>54</sup> Once the base of operations is established, the SAF engages in larger scale joint combat operations against the insurgents heavily involving the sultanate air force in the close air support role. The SAF develops a simple strategy for defeating the insurgents; a number of fortified lines, made of concrete and barbed wire, parallel to the PDRY border are constructed with the purpose of closing down the external support

provided by the PDRY.<sup>55</sup> These fortified lines are established inland far enough to force the insurgents to exit the safety of the Dhofar Mountains and lead them into open ground in the north or to stay and take on the SAF.

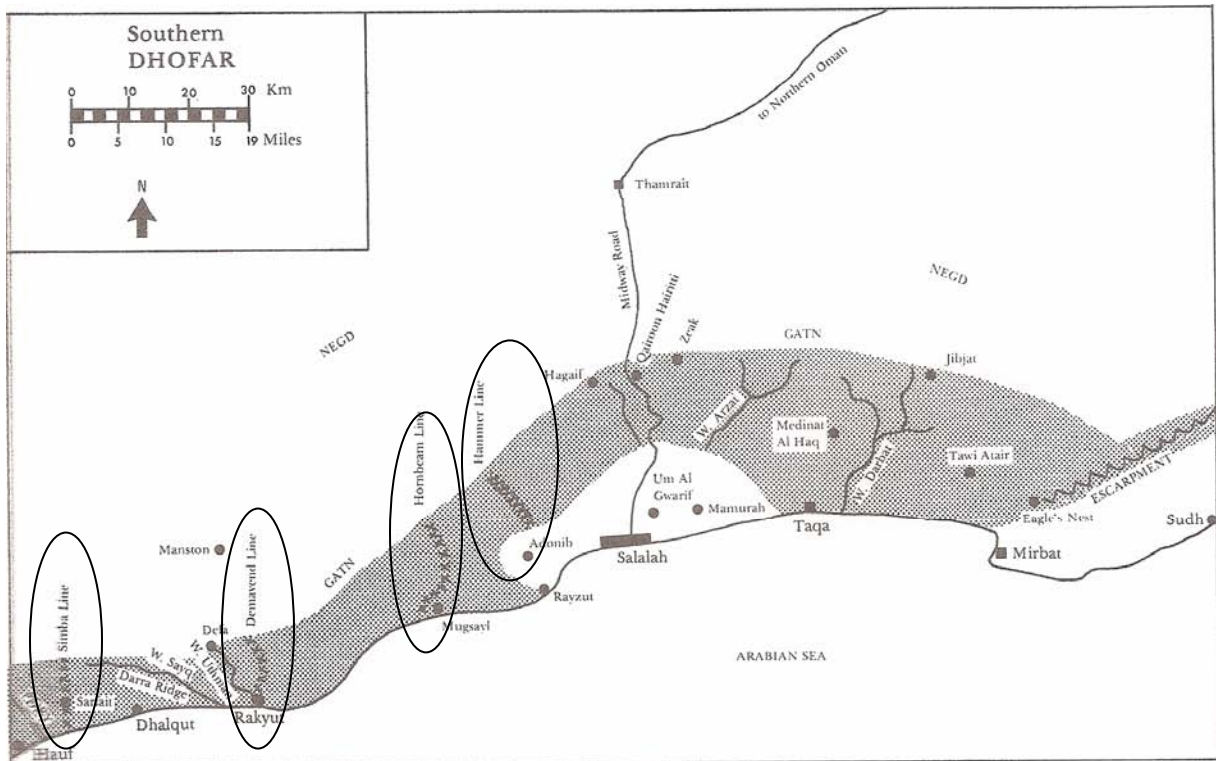


Figure 2. Fortified Lines of Dhofar.

Source: John Akehurst, *We won a war, The campaign in Oman 1965-1975*, Guildford 1982, 16.

The SAF then conducts large scale combat operations between these fortified lines in against larger enemy concentrations. In doing so, the COIN forces achieve two decisive objectives: the containment of the insurgency, thereby gradually limiting the external support and a sequential engagement of the insurgents which provides the SAF with the tactical advantage. The SAF then brings all the combat power of both the SAF and the Sultanates air force to bear on the insurgent forces. The iron hand tactics combined with a velvet glove approach toward any insurgents, who decides to change



sides and join the COIN fight proves to be the right combination for success, which subsequently lead to defeat of the insurgency in 1975.

The application of the economic instrument of national power is well synchronized with the diplomatic, informational and military elements of national power. Early in the COIN fight, Sultan Qaboos promises money as an incentive to quit the insurgent ranks and join force with the SAF, which proves very efficient. By 1975 almost 3000 insurgents have shifted sides and joined the fight on with the COIN forces with one of the determining incentives being money for weapons.<sup>56</sup> Upon executing the COIN strategy, the Sultanate immediately begin to allocate financial aids to the Dhofar region. This economic injection into the region materializes through the initiation of a number of projects such as the construction of wells, the building of schools and clinics.<sup>57</sup> The COIN forces realize the importance in timing, hereby putting actions behind the promises made by the Sultan. Therefore these financially founded projects are executed immediately upon an area of the Dhofar Mountains has been declared secure.

The significance of the employment of the economic instrument of national power can be learned from the drastic increase in the government expenditure. From 1971 to 1975, the Omani budget for economic and social development increased from \$60 million to \$1000 million, with almost 25% used solely in the Dhofar region. The funding of this massive economic injection is founded partly in the revenues from the Omani oil production and partly in the external financial support that Oman receives especially from Saudi Arabia and UAE. The fact that the Sultan possesses the ability to actually place significant economic assets behind the promises made to the Omani populace contributes decisively to the overall success of the COIN fight.

The following chapter provides insight into the Kashmir insurgency. This insurgency is analyzed through the same variables in order to set the stage for the comparative analysis provided in Chapter Seven.

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas R. Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency in the Post- Imperial Era*, Manchester 1995, page 72.

<sup>2</sup> Oman. *Tribes on the Jebel*, available at <http://www.historyworld.net>., (accessed between 02 June – 18 September 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 10 SEP 2007).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 10 SEP 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Mockaitis, 73.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>7</sup> Robert. S. Sarnoski, *The fight for Oman*, Alabama 1995, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 133. Jebel Akhdar meaning the “Green Mountain”.

<sup>9</sup> Oman. *Dhofar Rebellion*, available at <http://www.4janes.com>., (accessed between 27 May – 05 June 2007).

<sup>10</sup> Sarnoski, 5.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>13</sup> Mockaitis, 72.

<sup>14</sup> Cheney, 3.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>16</sup> Mockaitis, 75.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>18</sup> Mockaitis, 74.

<sup>19</sup> Cheney, 7.

- <sup>20</sup> Calvin H. Allen, *Oman the Modernization of the Sultanate*, Boulder 1987, 81.
- <sup>21</sup> Cheney, 7.
- <sup>22</sup> John Newsinger, *British Counterinsurgency*, Hampshire 2002, 142.
- <sup>23</sup> Allen, 80.
- <sup>24</sup> Newsinger, 141.
- <sup>25</sup> Mockaitis, 71.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid., 79.
- <sup>27</sup> American University, *Persian Gulf states – country studies*, Washington 1984, 344-345.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., 344-345.
- <sup>29</sup> Mockaitis, 76.
- <sup>30</sup> Sarnoski, 14.
- <sup>31</sup> Tony Jeapes, *SAS – Operation Oman*, Nashville 1980, 24-25.
- <sup>32</sup> Mockaitis, 72-73.
- <sup>33</sup> Sarnoski, 16.
- <sup>34</sup> Robin Corbett, *Guerilla warfare from 1939 to present day*, London 1986, 136.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., 136.
- <sup>36</sup> Mockaitis, 74.
- <sup>37</sup> Ranulph Fiennes, *Where Soldiers Fear to Tread*, London 1975, 133.
- <sup>38</sup> Allen, 70.
- <sup>39</sup> Douglas S. Blaufarb, *Who Will Win*, New York 1989, 51.
- <sup>40</sup> Mockaitis, 73.
- <sup>41</sup> John Akehurst, *We Won a War*, The campaign in Oman 1965-1975, Guildford 1982, 19.
- <sup>42</sup> Newsinger, 142.

<sup>43</sup> Mockaitis, 77.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>46</sup> Jeapes, 261.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>49</sup> Allen, 92.

<sup>50</sup> Cheney, 29.

<sup>51</sup> Mockaitis, 78.

<sup>52</sup> Oman. *COIN Strategy*, available at <http://www.britains-smallwars.com>, (accessed between 02 June – 05 July 2007).

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., the firqats numbered 1800 men in total.

<sup>54</sup> Mockaitis, 79.

<sup>55</sup> Jeapes, 161.

<sup>56</sup> Mockaitis, 79.

<sup>57</sup> Newsinger, 149.

## CHAPTER 5

### Kashmir Case Study

*I was a student in Pakistan studying Islam. And I came into contact with many people who were connected with Taliban.*

*John Walker Lindh, US citizen and Taliban member 2001*

This chapter provides an analysis of the insurgency in Kashmir in order to determine the decisive factors in the COIN strategy planned and executed by India. Initially, a brief historical overview set the conditions for further analysis, which is conducted in accordance with the methodology described in Chapter Three of this thesis. The methodology uses eight variables: geography, demographics, ethnicity and cross border ethnicity, economy, governmental institutions, external support, the insurgency strategy and finally, the COIN strategy. The analysis focuses on Jammu and Kashmir; Indian administered Kashmir and provides decisive elements to the answer of the primary research question: Can counterinsurgency operations be successful, when the insurgents are operating from safe havens and staging areas in neighboring states?

The regional conflict over Kashmir, directly involving the nuclear powers of Pakistan and India is extremely difficult to solve diplomatically. The major reason is the intractable attitudes of Pakistan and India. Until recently Pakistan has seen no other solution than the accession of Kashmir into Pakistan. On the other hand, India continues to regard the conflict an internal issue and therefore has no intention of engaging in negotiations with either external actors, like Pakistan or the insurgent organizations within Jammu and Kashmir. Apart from the diplomatic disagreements, the primary

drivers of the insurgency have been both the brutality of the Indian COIN campaign and the availability of cross border support of the insurgency.

An often very violent and inhumane COIN strategy – best described as an iron fist in a steel glove, has failed to win over the popular support for the Indian COIN effort. Instead, the brutal approach by the Indian security forces, ranging from unjustified killings of innocent civilians to torture and gang rapes, is a decisive factor in the continuation of the Jammu and Kashmir conflict as it causes Muslim fundamentalists to actively engage in the insurgency. From the beginning of the insurgency, extensive cross border support is available to the insurgency, both from Pakistan Administered Kashmir (PAK) and from mainland Pakistan. The support materializes in a variety of ways, ranging from material support, through advisory support to the utilization of training camps within Pakistani borders to employment of foreign fighters from bases in both PAK and Pakistan.

The Indian strategic information operations campaign focuses around an extremely restrictive press policy, basically denying the world press access to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. India succeeds in minimizing the outside world's interest in and knowledge of the ongoing COIN campaign executed in the mountainous state of Jammu and Kashmir. Although approximately 600,000 Indian soldiers and paramilitary forces are employed in the region, fighting an inferior enemy of only around 10-30,000 insurgents, India has not yet succeeded in defeating the insurgency.

### Background

In 1947, when British ruling comes to a halt in South East Asia, approximately 550 princely states in the British Jewel of the Empire can either turn to India or Pakistan

for governance. For most of the states, this is an easy choice, as they are predominantly Hindu populated, automatically leaving them with close ties to India. Kashmir, however, is a different story. Kashmir, an area predominantly populated by Muslims, is ruled by a Hindu. Furthermore, it is the only kingdom which borders onto both India and Pakistan, thus it has the opportunity of connecting to either country. Maharaj Singh, the Kashmir ruler, seek to exploit this unique situation in an attempt to gain Kashmir independence. However, Maharaja's plan is not successful.

In the fall of 1947, Pakistan instigates an insurgency into Kashmir, by the use of Pakistani Army personnel disguised as Pathan tribesmen. Maharaj Singh turns to India for help, and receives it on the condition of a Kashmiri accession to India, following a plebiscite by the Kashmiri population. India subsequently deploys forces to Kashmir. As a result the Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK) and PAK are established, divided by the Line of Control (LoC). The plebiscite, as promised by India, never materializes despite a 1948 UN resolution. Since then wars between India and Pakistan are fought over Kashmir in 1948 and 1965, and minor engagements erupt in 1971 during the India - Pakistan war over Bangladesh.

In 1988-89, an Islamic rebellion in IAK occurs, which rapidly grow into the very insurgency India has countered ever since. India commences counterinsurgency (COIN) operations (ops) through a robust deployment of troops. The insurgency grows through the 1990s, supported by both foreign fighters as well as by Pakistan, who provides logistical support and sanctuaries in PAK. In the spring of 1999, the situation deteriorates, when Pakistani troops enter the Kargil sector, situated along the Line of Control (LoC), and the region is once again at the brink of war between India and

Pakistan. The situation is normalized following extensive efforts by then United States President Bill Clinton. In 2003, a peace process is initiated, which leads to a decrease in Pakistani support for the insurgency and a reopening of the border (LoC) between IAK and PAK in 2005.



Figure 3. Kashmir

Source: University of Texas libraries, accessed on 02 November 2007 at, [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle\\_east\\_and\\_asia/kashmir\\_disputed\\_2002.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/kashmir_disputed_2002.jpg)

### Geography

Kashmir occupies an area of some 220.000 square kilometers and borders the northern regions of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan and the SW corner of China. Figure 3 refers. Kashmir is entirely under external control by India (43%), Pakistan (37%) and



China (20%)<sup>1</sup>. Kashmir entails a fertile environment with water, trees and plains as well as two major mountain massifs of the Himalayas and the Karakoram mountains respectively.<sup>2</sup> The rivers of Indus, Jhelum and Chenab are running through the Kashmiri countryside. These rivers represent invaluable water suppliers for both Pakistan and India making the Kashmiri soil of strategic importance to both nations.

One third of the area constitutes PAK which for the most part borders IAK along the LoC, a UN monitored stretch of the border. The LoC is supplemented by the undefined Siachen glacier area to the far north of Kashmir in immediate vicinity of Chinese controlled territory. This more than 700 km long line cuts through a varied terrain, from flatland, hills and semi-tropical growth in the south, through Pir Panjal Range to the main range of the Himalayas in the North. There are occupied military positions up to 14,000 feet until, north of the Jhelum River, where the elevation exceeds 18000 feet. The west-east section of the LoC lies along and across mountain ridges, some over 18,000 feet, where any kind of movement is difficult and dangerous.<sup>3</sup>

However, both the flatland and the non permissive mountainous terrain provide numerous concealed crossing points from IAK to PAK.<sup>4</sup> These crossings enable cross border operations through the use of PAK as a safe haven for the JK insurgency and at the same time offers re-supply opportunities for the insurgency. The importance of the river Jhelum flowing out of Kashmir and into Pakistan is significant as it supports the Pakistani canal base irrigation systems hereby enabling the utilization of the farmland.<sup>5</sup> The majority of the remainder of Kashmir constitutes the IAK which borders both Pakistan and China. Within this geographical area are both mountainous and agricultural lands. The latter constituted by the Vale, a 125 x 60 km valley.

The Kashmiri climate is regarded as extreme. In the winter season, from November to March, the snowline is as low as 1000 meters with the valley areas covered in snow.<sup>6</sup> The snowfall impacts the ability to cross the LoC into Pakistan which again has a diminishing effect on the cross border support from PAK into IAK. During the Monsoon in July and August, the humidity reaches a high of 70% due to which the mountains surrounding the valley areas are often covered in thick fog, which facilitates covert cross border activities and hampers fixed wing and helicopter operations.<sup>7</sup>

The infrastructure in IAK is as developed as of other states in India. Electricity is available in all regions except from a few very remote mountainous areas. The majority of the IAK populace has access to radio.<sup>8</sup> There is a well developed telephone system available in IAK, with pay phones available even in smaller villages. The cell phone communications system is only partially developed. The lack of a well developed cell phone network is allegedly a desire from the Indian government to prevent the Kashmiri insurgents from utilizing cell phones as part of their command and control network. The road network is relatively well developed in the valley areas, whereas the roads in the mountains for the most part are limited to goat tracks. This lack of infrastructure in the mountains has a restrictive impact on the insurgent's ability to re supply and conduct cross border movements in general. At the same time, the lack of road network also limits Indian security forces ability to conduct operations.

### Demographics

IAK, divided into the regions of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, is inhabited by approximately 10 million people dispersed throughout the areas of Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh regions. The Jammu region is primarily inhabited by Hindu, Kashmir region by

Muslim and Ladakh region by Buddhist.<sup>9</sup> These demographics of IAK lay out the complexity of the issue. While there is an identifiable Kashmiri ethnicity, the three groups are distinct, complicating any notion of "Kashmiri nationalism or independence." The implications of these divisions of the Jammu and Kashmir population is a significant issue which will have to be faced whenever a solution to the situation in Kashmir is to be reached.

Table 1. IAK Demographics					
<b>IAK</b>	Population	Muslim	Hindu	Buddhist	Sikh
Jammu	4,4 mio	29 %	65 %	Less than 2%	Less than 5%
Kashmir	5,4 mio	96 %	less than 4%	None	Less than 1%
Ladakh	0,25 mio	49 %	Less than 1%	51 %	1 %

*Source:* [http://kashmirstudygroup.net/pressreleases/0403\\_ksgintlstud.html](http://kashmirstudygroup.net/pressreleases/0403_ksgintlstud.html). Accessed on 01 September 2007.

The data in table 1 is from the year 1981. The reasons for this relatively old data can be multiple. First of all the Indian government may be reluctant to publish material which shows a significant majority of Muslims in the Kashmir region. Second, the security situation in IAK may not facilitate an official investigation with the aim of determining the demographics and religious relations within the region.

### Ethnicity and Cross Border Ethnicity

The ethnic issue in Jammu and Kashmir is one of the significant variables causing the conflict within the region. The ethnic map of Jammu and Kashmir is as dotted as the above demographics table indicates. Kashmir is originally Buddhist, then become Hindu

and remains Hindu until Muslim conquerors convert the majority of the population to Islam.<sup>10</sup> Both the Muslim and Hindu population in Kashmir since develop their own religious and ethnic identity, where the Hindus refer to themselves as Kashmir Pandits, sharing a close ethnic culture with the Muslims.<sup>11</sup> Even the language in Jammu and Kashmir is different from that in the rest of India. The dispute is fed by the fact that the population in Jammu and Kashmir looks different from the rest of India. The Kashmiris are fair skinned with fine features, whereas the predominant part of the Hindu population in India is small and dark skinned.<sup>12</sup>

The cross border ethnic issues are three fold. The Muslim population of Jammu and Kashmir is ethnically tied to the Muslim population of Pakistan, the Hindus with the Hindus in India and the Buddhists in Ladakh with the Tibetans. The cross border ethnic tie between Pakistan and J&K is by far the predominant reason for both the official and unofficial support of the Kashmir insurgency provided from within Pakistani territory. The official Pakistani support materializes mainly as direct military support such as training and weapons deliveries. The unofficial support focuses around covert Pakistani support from the Inter Service Intelligence agency (ISI) in terms of funding and advisory undertakings as well as ethnic and religious related foreign fighters taking part in the insurgency against India. Some of these fighters have extensive combat experience from the Afghan-Soviet war. It is further argued that the success of the Afghan Muslims in expelling the Russians from Afghanistan, indirectly leads the Kashmir Muslims to believe in the success of a revolt.

The significance of the cross border ethnic issues increases as the refugees from IAK start to flow into PAK, fleeing the ill treatment of the Indian security forces.<sup>13</sup> This

causes entire families and generations to set up a base in PAK and hereby providing human material to the ISI sponsored Kashmiri training camps within northern Pakistan. The young Kashmiri males; who decide to join the fight against the Indian security forces, now became possible recruits of the former Afghan mujahedeen's combat veterans from the Afghan-Soviet War. This direct and intense contact with the former Afghan mujahedeen up through the 1990s offers a new aspect to the insurgency, in that the quest for independence argued strongly by the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, slowly is replaced by more extremist thoughts of regional Muslim unification.

### Economy

The Kashmiri economy is founded on farming, rug making and handcrafts, all trades in which the economic return is limited.<sup>14</sup> In Kashmir, the economic discrimination of the Muslim population is significant. The Hindu and the Sikh communities are in control of the majority of the real estate and commerce. However, the Indian government attempts to boost the economic development in terms of significant increase in living standards for the population. One of the major reasons for the failing attempt to improve the economic situation is the need for financing the COIN effort within the region. It is estimated that as much as 60% of the government funding has been used to cover COIN spending.<sup>15</sup>

The overarching consequence of the economic focus on the COIN effort is basically a bankruptcy of Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore there are significant problems in creating economic growth.<sup>17</sup> An increase in the difference between the revenue deficit and the fiscal deficit to approximately 227.5 million USD leads to further deterioration of the infrastructure.<sup>18</sup> Sufficient infrastructure such as road networks and

telecommunication is of great importance when attempting to attract outside investments. Besides the increase in allocation of financial assets to the COIN effort, unemployment is an area of grave concern. Currently accessible unemployment figures for Jammu and Kashmir numbers around 170,000 individuals out of a workforce of some 3.7 million, roughly 5 %. However, the truth of the matter is that the unemployment figure only displays the number of people who registers as unemployed as this is an individual responsibility. Since there are no significant gains in registering neither job nor is monetary wise, the validity of these numbers are at best doubtful. Further investigation into the matter reveals that whilst the population has increased from approximately 6 million in 1981, to 10 million in 2006,<sup>19</sup> the generation of employment within Jammu and Kashmir has not been able to keep up with this population increase. There are only very limited industrial development in the region and the governmental recruitment is halted due to lack of available financial means, as the majority of the funding is directed into the COIN effort.<sup>20</sup>

The increase in unemployment and the absence of significant industrial development are both drivers for an unsatisfactory populace. Once especially the younger population realizes that there is no apparent future within the region, it basically leaves them with two options; leave and work elsewhere in India or stay in Jammu and Kashmir and either become unemployed or join the other unsatisfied citizens and fight the current rulers in order to try and change the situation. Investigations into the connection between unemployment and recruitment to the insurgency reveal that more than 25% join the insurgency as unemployed.<sup>21</sup>

The lack of security as well as sufficient infrastructure within the region has significant negative implications both with regards to foreign investments in Jammu and Kashmir but also with regards to the return of tourism to the state.<sup>22</sup> The poor state of the Jammu and Kashmir economy and the inadequate attempts by the central government to better this situation are important factors with regards to feeding the ongoing insurgency within the region.

### Governmental Institutions.

The governor of Jammu and Kashmir governs the state through the legislative assembly. A multi party democratic system is in effect, similar to that of the rest of India. Over the years, Jammu and Kashmir has been ruled by pro-Indian Muslim politicians who are believed to have been involved in criminal activities such as: bribery, extortion and corruption.<sup>23</sup> The local government counteres any public opinion against the Indian led ruling of the state with immediate arrests often under brutal circumstances.

The politics surrounding the state of Jammu and Kashmir is very complex and believed by many to be the centre of gravity with regards to a solution to the conflict. Pakistan is attempting to promote a solution where Kashmir becomes part of Pakistan or at least independent, whereas India pursues a solution with either a status quo, Kashmir as part of India, or a semiautonomous Kashmir. Until late 2006, Pakistan has stood fast on a demand for a referendum on the Kashmir issue as per United Nations resolutions and India insists on cross border activities be brought to a halt before further negotiations can go forward. Both countries have taken on a more compromise seeking attitude toward the conflict.<sup>24</sup> However, a diplomatic solution has not been reached for almost 50 years why it is believed that there is still a long way to go.

### External Support

The external support to the parties in this conflict is provided by several nations and international organizations. In the following analysis the external support is divided into support of India and support of the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir. The external support of India mainly materializes on the diplomatic level, whether it is in the form of pressure applied on Pakistan or various weapons sale agreements with major international actors. Since the international community fails to apply enough diplomatic pressure on India, to have the UN resolution founded plebiscite from 1948 executed, it is argued that diplomatic support for India has basically been in place since the 1948 UN resolution. When Pakistan becomes a nuclear power in 1998, the international community's interest in this conflict increases. The insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir now is a conflict which has the potential of igniting a nuclear war. However, silence in this case can be regarded as consensus from the International community, thereby favoring India.

External support for the insurgency materializes in many different forms: financial support, political support, material support, safe havens, mercenaries and direct military support. External support is provided by nation states as well as international and private organizations and because of the nature of this support it is essential to view this conflict through a regional perspective. Therefore external support for the insurgency makes the Jammu Kashmir insurgency anything but an isolated Indian national issue.

The financial support for the Jammu Kashmir insurgents is predominantly provided by various Islamic charities around the world and by Pakistan as the single highest contributor.<sup>25</sup> Pakistan provides more than 25% of the annual 125-250 million USD. However, several organizations throughout Western Europe in the United States



and Persian Gulf states provide financial support for the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir. The Pakistani ISI is responsible for handling the practical part of getting the funding where it is needed through couriers or through the use of Hawala, a unique monetary exchange system utilized throughout the world.<sup>26</sup> This system is built around money brokers who conduct the money transfer through verbal agreements, hereby making it close to impossible to track the transactions for governmental agencies. The continuous influx of financial support to the insurgency is a significant factor in keeping the insurgent threat viable.

The external political support for the Jammu and Kashmir insurgency is provided solely by Pakistan. Pakistan attempts to internationalize the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir through the involvement of the United Nations. Initially, this effort is successful through the UN resolution of 1948, calling for a plebiscite; however, the fact that India is not complying with that specific resolution is an indicator of the limited political support the insurgency has apart from that of Pakistan. With regards to the material support of the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir, there is one major external actor: the Pakistani ISI. The ISI support is crucial with regards to supplying the insurgents with weaponry such as automatic rifles, various munitions and mortars.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, ISI provides various communication systems for the insurgency as well as the necessary training required to successfully operate these systems.

The PAK, as well as Pakistan itself, serves as an invaluable safe haven for the Muslim insurgents inside IAK. In the border region of PAK and IAK the refugee camps has a secondary role as safe haven for the insurgents operating inside IAK.<sup>28</sup> Within these camps and other training camps, the insurgents have the opportunity to carry out training

of new and inexperienced insurgents well out of range of the Indian security forces.<sup>29</sup> It is estimated that as of 2001 approximately 90 of these types of training camps are operational within Pakistan and PAK.<sup>30</sup>

In the 1990s the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir becomes the new area of operations for several hundreds of mercenaries from Muslim countries. These mercenaries are veterans from the Afghan-Soviet war and now find themselves with a new area of operations and a new enemy.<sup>31</sup> These combat experienced mercenaries bring vital combat experience to the Jammu and Kashmir insurgency. Further, they carry with them the reputation of Muslim extremists with no fear of death. These fighters soon are known to be merciless and not to take any prisoners.<sup>32</sup> The arrival of these foreign mercenaries demoralizes the Indian units and furthermore the reputation of the veterans of the Afghan-Soviet war causes the Indian units to remain within their fortifications, hereby hampering the Indian COIN effort.<sup>33</sup>

Throughout the insurgency, the Pakistani and Indian military forces execute several operations against one another, including sheer artillery duels especially in the Sanci Glacier area. However, the Pakistani military forces situated along the LoC have reportedly carried out several operations in direct support of the insurgents inside IAK, such as artillery preparatory fires and cover fires from heavy automatic weapons in support of insurgent infiltrations into IAK.<sup>34</sup>

### Insurgency Strategy

The insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir is ignited with the hanging of the leader of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) in Delhi in 1984.<sup>35</sup> Since then, it assumes a rather complex nature, involving a variety of Islamist insurgency groups at

times numbering as many as 150 different organizations. This number decreases to around 30 groups at present.<sup>36</sup> The insurgency numbers as many as 100,000 passive and active supporters, whereas there are relatively few men under arms, estimated around 4-10,000.<sup>37</sup> Since the 1989 revolt, the most significant of these organizations is the pro-independence JKLF the radical Islamic and pro-Pakistani groups Hizb-ul-Mujahedeen (HUM), Hizbollah, and Harkat-ul-Ansar (HUA).<sup>38</sup> The following sections discuss these major parties, their objectives and the cohesion or rather lack thereof as well as the complexity of the insurgency.

The most powerful of the insurgent organizations is the Hizbul Mujahedeen (HM), founded in 1989. HM is the militant wing of Pakistan's largest Islamic party Jamaai-I- Islami, with the declared objective of an independent Kashmir. HM number around 1000 members under arms.<sup>39</sup> The organization has been operating inside Afghanistan in the mid 1990s until the initiation of the Taliban ruling in support of Hiezb-I-Islama Gulbuddin (HIG).<sup>40</sup> HM is believed to be conducting cross border operations out of safe havens inside Pakistan or PAK. The combat experience and the extremism of HM as well as the fact that safe havens are provided outside Kashmir, makes HM a potent adversary for the Indian security forces.

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front is pursuing independence for the state of Jammu and Kashmir. This organization is initially viewed as the main effort in the Jammu and Kashmir insurgency by the ISI, thereby receiving the majority of the external support.<sup>41</sup> The main issue for the JKLF is a plebiscite in Kashmir; however, the JKLF never neglects the opportunity to promote an independent Kashmir. The issue of independence proves to be some what disastrous as it leads the ISI to look for other

insurgency organizations with objectives more aligned with the ISI. The decreasing external support of the JKLF as well as successful Indian COIN operations which in 1996 killed approximately 40 high level members of the JKLF reduces the organization to one of secondary interest.<sup>42</sup>

The HUA now referred to as Harkat ul Mujahedeen, is a strong religious Muslim movement supporting Islamic world power.<sup>43</sup> The objective of this organization is to cease Indian ruling in Kashmir. However, through the 1990s the organization basically ceases to exist, due to partially the loss of its leadership during various operations inside Jammu and Kashmir, partially due to decrease in Pakistani support. The group is labeled a terrorist organization by the United States in 1997.<sup>44</sup> It is now believed that the HUA has ceased to exist and that a former prominent leader figure is attempting to form a new organization; Jaish-e-Mohammad Mujhaeddin E-Tanzeem, with the initial objective of uniting all the insurgent organizations operating within Jammu and Kashmir.

The Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) is a major Muslim extremist organization operating within Jammu and Kashmir. The objective for LeT is initially an independent Kashmir, however, the objectives of the organization are more far reaching such as a unification of all Muslims that surrounds Pakistan. Therefore, LeT is active in places such as Chechnya and Central Asia. The LeT leadership names the US, Israel and India to be the primary enemies of the organization. LeT is labeled a terrorist organization by both the United States and Pakistan; however, it still receives significant support primarily in terms of funding from the ISI<sup>45</sup>. Apparently, LeT has close ties to both the Taliban and Al Qaeda and this relationship have brought new and refined modus operandi to the state of

Kashmir, such as suicide bombers and targeting of innocent civilians.<sup>46</sup> In conclusion, LeT is a very potent player in the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>47</sup>

The above breakdown of some of the more important insurgent organizations involved in the fight against the Indian security forces, provides some insight to the complexity of this insurgency. The large number of groups each with different agendas and objectives some even fighting one another makes it hard to execute a united diplomatic effort. The lack of a unified political message as well as the fact that a large part of the insurgency organizations are labeled as terrorist organizations, makes it very difficult to engage in formal negotiations due to the fact that deals struck with one or more organizations may not be adhered to by other organizations. The multiple insurgencies, which basically are a part of the ISI strategy for the Jammu and Kashmir insurgency have and still is undermining any possibility of massing the efforts and in doing so applying significant pressure on the Indian security forces.<sup>48</sup> Basically, the insurgency has divided itself, hereby making it easier for India to counter.

The insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir is initiated upon a desire to conduct a plebiscite and subsequently become either independent or become a part of Muslim Pakistan. However, throughout the 1990s the insurgency has undergone changes, which internationalizes it. On one hand, the internationalization is advantageous as it provides more fighters, more external support hereby enhancing the violent capabilities of the insurgency. Furthermore, it forces the world press to become more interested in the situation within the state of Kashmir and hereby applying pressure on India. On the other hand though, the internationalization of the Jammu and Kashmir insurgency can backfire. The targeting of innocent civilians and a general increase in violence can lead to a

decrease in popular support amongst the Kashmiri, hereby removing the foundation for the insurgency ultimately leading to its defeat.

### COIN Strategy

The following section discusses the Indian COIN strategy through the way India applies the diplomatic, informational, military and economic instruments of national power in the attempt to defeat the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir. In general, India adopts the COIN strategy developed during the 1970s fighting against the guerilla movements in the north eastern parts of the country. This strategy builds the violent part of the COIN effort on utilizing both military and paramilitary forces.<sup>49</sup> The Indian government is often been openly criticized for not seeking a solution to the Jammu and Kashmir insurgency through the application of the diplomatic instrument of national power. However, in recent times, there are been signs of a thawing out in the Indian attitude towards a diplomatic solution to the problem in Kashmir through direct meetings at the highest governmental levels with the Pakistani counterparts.<sup>50</sup>

One of the reasons for the Indian reluctance to seek a diplomatic solution is the massive support to the insurgency provided by India's immediate neighbor, Pakistan. Through the extensive support to the Jammu and Kashmir insurgency, Pakistan is conducting a proxy war against India, basically forcing India to respond militarily in the defense of the strategic important state of Kashmir. In defense of the lack of Indian diplomatic effort, it should be noted that the fact that the insurgency at times numbers up to 150 different organizations have made it difficult to identify major players with enough cross organization influence in the insurgent community to be able to follow through on negotiations.

Furthermore, the development of the insurgency from an insurgency with secessionist motives to an insurgency pursuing the objectives of Muslim extremism substantiates the Indian belief in a robust military approach rather than a diplomacy based solution. This approach is further supported by a more positive Pakistani approach to India since the September 11 attacks on the US. Furthermore, the change in the Pakistani attitude towards the Jammu and Kashmir insurgency is founded partially in that Pakistan as a trusted United States ally in the GWOT is prohibited from supporting terrorist organizations. Furthermore, the decrease in Pakistani support of the Jammu and Kashmir insurgency is directly related to the decrease in violence since 2002. Finally, the fact that the Muslim extremists supporting and conducting the fighting in Kashmir is a threat to the moderate Muslim ruling within Pakistan itself is also seen as a driver for a decrease in Pakistani support of the insurgents in Kashmir.

The fact that India views the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir an internal dispute is a significant reason for India not to pursue diplomatic means to reach a solution. If India overtly commences negotiations with the insurgent organizations it could relatively easy be interpreted as a legitimization of these organizations and thereby of the insurgency and its case. A significant portion of these insurgent organizations are labeled as terrorist organizations by the United States, why any affiliation with them would seriously harm India's desire to be viewed as a major political, military and economic player on the world scene and basically be out of sync with the India's strategic objectives.

However, with the India-Pakistan talks of early 2007, it would appear as if the diplomatic instrument of national power is now applied to a larger extent by India in

order to come to a solution to the more than 60 year old conflict in Kashmir. The recent diplomatic approach can be a result of India reaching the conclusion that a heavy handed approach only leads to a radicalization of the insurgency, making it an even more potent Muslim threat to Hindu ruled India.<sup>51</sup>

The conflict in Kashmir is known for the Indian government's non permissive application of the informational instrument of national power. India is relatively successful in shutting of the state of Kashmir from the world press, enabling the Indian security forces to go forward in a violent fashion without the international community being informed through independent sources. Even independent journalists have had great difficulty in reporting from Kashmir, due to threats on their lives. On several occasions, journalists have been randomly executed by Indian security forces as well as by pro Indian paramilitary forces.<sup>52</sup> Instead, India focuses the informational instrument of national on gaining international support for the COIN effort in Kashmir, especially since the attacks of 11 September, has India appealed to the international community for support in the struggle against what India regards the terrorists operating inside Kashmir. This approach is somewhat successful in that the United States is labeling some of the major insurgent organizations as terrorists.

In order for the government of India to be successful in the COIN effort in IAK, the informational instrument of national power will have to be applied more precisely. India can only legitimize the COIN efforts in the state of Kashmir through a more open approach towards the world media. With independent media present in Kashmir, India has every opportunity to counter any allegations of brutalism, torture, rape and random killings which have been posed against India throughout this conflict. However, the



counterargument being that the presence of independent media would force India to execute a COIN strategy which is in accordance with international law.

The military instrument of national power is India's preferred tool to seek a solution on the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir. At the outbreak of the revolt in 1989, the Indian government applies the same strategy executed in the crushing of the Sikh rebellion in Punjab in the 1980s.<sup>53</sup> The first and most important step in the military focused COIN strategy is to identify the individual who can execute a heavy handed and ruthless military plan. India appoints a former Muslim operative from the Indian Intelligence Service, (RAW), to lead the COIN effort in Jammu and Kashmir. This choice is founded in the belief that it would take a Muslim to effectively kill Muslims. A formidable force of several divisions of mountain troops and paramilitary police forces are then rushed to Jammu and Kashmir where allegedly thousands of Kashmir's are beaten, tortured, raped and executed.<sup>54</sup> The Indian security forces conduct operations in accordance with the "iron hand in a steel glove" principle, hereby alienating the local populace and sparking the formation of resistance groups.

The Indian COIN strategy remains focused around an extremely brutal approach to the local populace. If any militant activity is reported in a specific area, the Indian security forces stages a so called "crackdown," where an area is cordoned off, the inhabitants paraded in front of masked informants and any men identified as militants are subsequently beaten and tortured on the spot often followed by execution of the individual before handing them over to the family.<sup>55</sup> The Indian security forces also use arson and rape as means of repression. On several occasions, villages believed to be housing militants are burned to the ground and the female inhabitants are raped often

repeatedly. The Indian forces are well aware of the fact that Muslim women who have been raped are regarded ‘unclean’ in Muslim communities.<sup>56</sup> These atrocities carried out by Indian or Indian led security and paramilitary forces are crucial in feeding the insurgency. In conclusion, the brutality of the Indian COIN strategy is counter productive. However, India is not expected to change this violent approach. India asserts that the insurgency has decreased in strength due to the execution of a violent strategy and not as much due to a decrease in external support from Pakistan.

Throughout the 1990s the Indian engagement increases and by 1998 reaches a number of approximately 600,000 men, 300,000 of whom being paramilitary.<sup>57</sup> Apart from projecting a significant amount of forces into Jammu and Kashmir, Indian forces realize the importance of trying to mitigate the cross border opportunity for the insurgency. Therefore, by 1996, India seals the LoC with barbed wire, motion detectors and extensive anti personnel minefields as well as large numbers of permanent guard forces, hereby decreasing the possibility for the insurgency to conduct cross border operations.<sup>58</sup> Initially, these actions are successful as the insurgency reportedly is at its lowest in late 1996/97. However, the ruthless repression of the Kashmiri population, especially the Muslims, catches the attention of Muslim fundamentalists in and around Pakistan and Muslim fundamentalists from as far as Egypt make their way to Pakistan in order to join in the fight against India. The brutal military focused COIN strategy serves as an invitation to Muslim fundamentalists to join the fight in Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>59</sup>

The economic instrument of national power is applied to some extent to the Kashmir conflict. India invests in extensive education programs, tries to improve the primitive and in certain areas non existent infrastructure. Some of these initiatives are

successful. Kashmir now has three universities, education is free and the number of students is growing.<sup>60</sup> However, attempts to expand the healthcare programs and improve Kashmiri transportation networks are less than successful. The failure of mitigating one of the major problems within Kashmir, unemployment, especially amongst the young males, is one of the significant problems for the COIN effort<sup>61</sup>. However, until present day India regards the application of the economic instrument of national power less important and rewarding in the COIN effort as opposed to the hard military approach.<sup>62</sup>

An extensive and robust economic focused reconstruction plan must be launched in order to execute a successful COIN strategy. The economic effort must focus on significantly reducing the current unemployment figures, especially amongst younger males which directly will affect the recruitment base for the insurgency in a negative way. If employment can be restored in Kashmir, hope will be restored in the population, which again will increase the probability for long term COIN success.

A solution to the insurgency in Kashmir is not immediately around the corner. Several proposals, ranging from an independent Kashmir to a solution in which the state ceases to exist and is a part of both India and Pakistan respectively are put forward, so far without results.<sup>63</sup> If and when a solution is found is impossible to say, however, until then, the priority must be on securing the populace of Jammu and Kashmir from any atrocities, whether that be from Indian security forces or insurgents.

The following chapter provides a case study of the current insurgency in Afghanistan, which focuses around the external support provided to the insurgents, especially in the non permissive tribal areas of the Afghanistan – Pakistan border region.

<sup>1</sup> Kashmir, *External Influence*, available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com>., (accessed on 01 October 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Eric S. Margolis, *War at TheTtop of The World*, The struggle for Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet, New York 2002, 56-57.

<sup>3</sup> Kashmir. *The Kashmir Dispute*, available at <http://www.stimson.org/?SN=SA2001112045>., (accessed between 10 August – 02 September 2007).

<sup>4</sup> N.C. Astana and Nirmal, *Terrorism, Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies*, Jaipur, India 2001, 94-97.

<sup>5</sup> Kashmir. *Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir*, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A2982512>., (accessed between 01 March – 10 November 2007).

<sup>6</sup> Kashmir. *Kashmiri Culture*, available at <http://www.ladakh-kashmir.com/jammu-kashmir-information/culture-jammu-kashmir.html>., (accessed between 05 June – 08 September 2007).

<sup>7</sup> Kashmir. *Background Information*, <http://www.kashmir-information.com/>., (accessed between 05 June – 08 September 2007).

<sup>8</sup> Sumit Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir*; portents of war, hopes of peace, Cambridge 1997, 35-37.

<sup>9</sup> Kashmir. *Kashmiri Ethnicity*, available at <http://www.ksamirstudygroup.net>., (accessed between 02 June – 05 July 2007). Table refers.

<sup>10</sup> Margolis, 64-67.

<sup>11</sup> Kashmir. *Background Information*, <http://www.kashmir-information.com/>., (accessed between 05 June – 08 September 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Margolis, 63.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>14</sup> Ganguly, 5-7.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 1-3.

<sup>16</sup> Kashmir. *Unemployment and Conflict*, available at <http://www.amrc.org.hk/alu12.htm>., (accessed between 02 October – 10 October 2007).

<sup>17</sup> 1 USD = 40 Indian rupees.

- <sup>18</sup> Ganguly, 9.
- <sup>19</sup> Kashmir. *Unemployment and Conflict*, available at <http://www.amrc.org.hk/alu12.htm>, (accessed on 15 September 2007).
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 15 September 2007).
- <sup>21</sup> Paul Medhurst, *Global Terrorism*, New York 2002, 162.
- <sup>22</sup> Kashmir, *Foreign Investments*, available at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu>, (accessed on 16 September 2007).
- <sup>23</sup> Margolis, 77.
- <sup>24</sup> Kashmir. *Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir*, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A2982512>, (accessed on 16 September 2007).
- <sup>25</sup> Kashmir. *Kashmir Conflict*, available at <http://www.rand.org/publications/bib/sra2004.pdf>, (accessed on 16 September 2007).
- <sup>26</sup> K. Santhanam, *Jihadis in Jammu and Kashmir*, New Delhi India, 2003, 35-36.
- <sup>27</sup> Margolis, 79.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., 89.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid., 90.
- <sup>30</sup> Kashmir. *Kashmir Conflict*, available at <http://www.rand.org/publications/bib/sra2004.pdf>, (accessed on 30 October 2007).
- <sup>31</sup> Margolis, 92.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid., 93.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid., 94.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid., 104.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., 87.
- <sup>36</sup> Santhanam, 7-8.
- <sup>37</sup> Samay Ram, *Tackling Insurgency and Terrorism*, New Delhi 2002, 141.
- <sup>38</sup> Kashmir. *Organizations Involved*, available at <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/jklf.htm>, (accessed on 17 September 2007).

<sup>39</sup> Kashmir. *Report on Jammu and Kashmir*, available at <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/testimony/36.pdf>., (accessed on 17 September 2007).

<sup>40</sup> The leader of HIG is the notorious Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, currently believed to be fighting NATO forces in Afghanistan.

<sup>41</sup> Kashmir. *Possible Treaty*, available at [http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/detailsmall\\_news.asp?date1=3/28/2006&id=14](http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/detailsmall_news.asp?date1=3/28/2006&id=14)., (accessed on 17 September 2007).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., (accessed on September 2007).

<sup>43</sup> Santhanam, 8.

<sup>44</sup> Kashmir. *Possible Treaty*, available at [http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/detailsmall\\_news.asp?date1=3/28/2006&id=14](http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/detailsmall_news.asp?date1=3/28/2006&id=14)., (accessed between 10 September – 17 September 2007).

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 17 September 2007).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 17 September 2007).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 17 September 2007).

<sup>48</sup> Santhanam, 7-8.

<sup>49</sup> Kashmir. *Organizations Involved*, available at <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/jklf.htm>., (accessed on 20 September 2007).

<sup>50</sup> Kashmir. *Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir*, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A2982512>., (accessed on 13 September 2007).

<sup>51</sup> This is believed to be the biggest fear in India.

<sup>52</sup> Kashmir. *Human Rights Violations*, available at <http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/sasia/india-security.htm>., (accessed on 08 September 2007).

<sup>53</sup> Marrgolis, 75.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>56</sup> This approach was also used by Serbian and Croatian forces in the Balkans in the 1990s.

<sup>57</sup> Margolis, 83.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>60</sup> Kashmir. *Educational Institutions*, available at <http://www.pppinindia.com>., (accessed on 16 September 2007).

<sup>61</sup> Kashmir. *Pakistani Involvement*, available at [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007\11\20\story\\_20-11-2007\\_pg7\\_43](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007\11\20\story_20-11-2007_pg7_43)., (accessed on 03 September 2007).

<sup>62</sup> Surveys indicate that one in every four joined the insurgency due to lack of employment.

<sup>63</sup> Kashmir. *Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir*, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A2982512>., (accessed on 15 September 2007).

## CHAPTER 6

### Afghanistan Case Study

*If Taliban elements are forced from Pakistan back into Afghanistan as a result of actions on the Pakistan side of the border, I'm sure that our military forces here working with Afghan forces will deal with those element.*

*Colin Powell, former US Secretary of State*

This chapter analyzes the insurgency in Afghanistan in order to determine the decisive factors in the COIN strategy planned and executed by the international Coalition. The initial section provides a brief historical overview in order to set the conditions for further analysis, which is conducted in accordance with the methodology described in Chapter Three of this thesis. The discussion will cover the variables: geography, demographics, ethnicity and cross border ethnicity, economy, governmental institutions, external support, the insurgency strategy and finally, the COIN strategy. The analysis focuses on the eastern parts of Afghanistan; however, the western parts of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan are discussed to some extent. The analysis provides decisive elements to the answer of the primary research question; can counterinsurgency operations be successful, when the insurgents are operating from safe havens and staging areas in neighboring states?

The current conflict in Afghanistan has proven extremely difficult to solve. In 2001 when the Taliban regime is toppled, the international community fails to acknowledge the magnitude of the conflict. Instead of assuming a regional approach, involving the relevant regional players, the conflict is viewed solely as an Afghan conflict. The lack of historical and cultural understanding from especially Western players and the failure of understanding the role of Pakistan and at the same time, the



fragility of the current leadership within Pakistan are some of the major flaws committed. The cross border support from Pakistan's western regions to the insurgency in Afghanistan materializes from late 2001 and is vital to maintaining the insurgency as a capable fighting force, see figures 4 and 7. The support materializes as safe havens, training camps and material and financial support in and from areas outside International and/or Pakistani control and reach.

The COIN strategy which focuses around building a strong central government based on the principles known from Western democracies is almost doomed to failure from the on set. The history of Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan depicts societies which are built around tribal decentralized ruling and any prior attempts to force a strong centralized government upon this region have failed. Therefore, the stronger the international community promotes a central government based out of Kabul; an increase in resistance must be anticipated. Therefore, an approach which acknowledges and appreciates these deeply engraved traditions and decentralizes the power of Afghanistan is necessary.

Poverty and unemployment are two of the most vital topics on the path to success in Afghanistan. An unemployment rate of 40% only favors the insurgency. Therefore, the international community must commit sufficient financial resources and facilitate the establishment of industrial and agricultural systems that serve as economic platforms for the nation as well as mitigates the poverty. These initiatives must be launched sooner rather than later by the COIN in order to build and improve the legitimacy of the effort in Afghanistan.

The future approach by the international community must be one of regional dimensions. The current situation in Pakistan and Kashmir are issues heavily tied to Afghanistan. However, during the course of future applications of the instruments of national power, it is absolutely pertinent that historical and cultural structures as well as the integrity of the nation states are respected and incorporated into the solutions. Finally commitment on the international community's side is the key to success. The necessary resources whether they be military forces, financial aid, humanitarian assistance and/or time must be allocated. Any signs of lack of cohesion within the international community only serve the insurgency. Commitment and cohesion are the centers of gravity.



Figure 4. Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Source: Frontline, Public Broadcasting Service, accessed on 30 October 2007 at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/taliban/tribal>.

### Background.

In December 1979 following a couple of years of internal unrest, the Soviet Union installs Babrak Karmal as the new Prime Minister in Afghanistan. Immediately upon the arrival of the Soviet forces an overwhelming part of the Afghan population is in opposition of the new ruler, either passively or actively.<sup>1</sup> The following years the Afghan freedom fighters, also known as the Mujahedeen succeeds in limiting Soviet control to the major urban areas of the country. The Mujahedeen are relatively poorly armed and organized; however, by 1984, support from the United States, China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan begin to materialize both in military and financial aid.<sup>2</sup> The major ground coordinators are the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Pakistani Inter Service Intelligence Agency (ISI), who allocates the majority of the support to the most fanatical of the “7 factions.”<sup>3</sup> The 7 factions, based out of Peshawar Pakistan, form an alliance in 1985 in order to coordinate the efforts in struggle against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

When Mikhail Gorbachev becomes President of the Soviet Union in 1985, significant efforts are placed into bringing an end to the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. As a result, the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan, with the United States and Soviet Union as guarantors, sign the Geneva Accords in 1988, settling the differences between the two neighbors.<sup>4</sup> A significant point in these negotiations was the lack of any Mujahedeen presence. The accords most importantly calls for the cessation of American and Soviet interference in Afghan and Pakistani internal affairs as well as a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan no later than mid February 1989.

President Mohammad Najibullah remained in power until March 1992 when General Rashid Dostum, an ethnic Uzbek, decides to withdraw his support. However, the fight for the Afghan capitol Kabul continues between the fanatic Pashto Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and The Northern Alliance led by Ahmad Shah Massoud, a Tajik now supported by General Dostum. Massoud is victorious and by the end of April 1992, Hekmatyar's forces are evicted from Kabul.<sup>5</sup>

For the first time in more than 300 years, the Pashtuns has lost control over Kabul. Furthermore, the Tajik Mujahedeen commander, Burhanuddin Rabbani, decides to displace the President, a moderate Pashto Mujadidi, and in doing so sparks the outbreak of civil war.<sup>6</sup> Fighting continues between the various Mujahedeen factions over the years and in 1994, Kabul and the north eastern parts of Afghanistan are controlled by the Tajik Commanders Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Massoud supported by the Uzbek Rashid Dostum, whereas the remainder of the country is controlled by different ethnic warlords.<sup>7</sup>

In the summer of 1994, General Rashid Dostum, being marginalized by the Rabbani government, decides to change sides and support Hekmatyar in the fight against Massoud.<sup>8</sup> At the same time the Hazaras, an ethnic group situated in the central part of Afghanistan, decides to join forces with Hekmatyar.<sup>9</sup> Massoud succeeds in holding on to the north eastern part of Afghanistan, from Kabul in the south through the Pansjir valley, and further to Konduz in the north east.

At this point in time, a new actor, the Taliban, enters the Afghan civil war. The organization headed by a one eyed Mullah, Mullah Omar, has achieved massive popular support in the southern part of Afghanistan when executing a local warlord for atrocities

committed against two young girls.<sup>10</sup> Within three months of 1994, the Taliban had assumed control of more than twelve southern provinces through a violent execution of the Sharia law. Now the Taliban is heading for Ghazni, Kabul and Herat.<sup>11</sup>

The Taliban continues the push northwards and although Massoud puts up a good fight and succeeds in repelling the Taliban a couple of times, the Taliban assumes control over Kabul in the fall of 1996. The next two years saw continued fighting in the north of Afghanistan so that by the end of 1998, the Taliban controls more than 90 % of the country.<sup>12</sup> The Taliban imposes an extreme interpretation of Islam throughout Afghanistan based upon a Pashto tribal code. The organization also commits human rights violations against women and girls and seeks to ethnically cleanse the Shia Hazaras and on several occasions executes non-combatants.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, the cooperation between Mullah Omar, the leader of Taliban and Osama bin Laden, the leader of Al Qaeda, develop. Suicide operators from Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda organization execute a successful attack on Massoud on 09 September 2001, when two suicide bombers posing as a journalist and a camera man set off an explosive device hidden in the camera. The most formidable opponent of the Taliban is now neutralized.

On 11 September 2001, the world witnesses the attack on New York and Washington D.C., which leads to an international coalition being formed in order to take on the Taliban and Al Qaeda regime in Afghanistan. By December 2001, US and British Special Forces heavily supported by close air support, and the Afghan Northern Alliance renders Taliban combat power ineffective. Through the Bonn agreement, an Afghan interim Authority was formed and by 22 December 2001, Hamid Karzai, a Pashto mujahedeen from central and southern Afghanistan, takes office as chairman.<sup>14</sup> Through

the Loya Jirga in early 2004 and the presidential elections in the fall of 2004, President Karzai is elected to remain in office, a position he still holds today.<sup>15</sup>

In 2003, the coalition realizes the reinforced capabilities of the resurfacing insurgency during the battle of Dai Chopan in south eastern Afghanistan. Having had a couple of years of relatively unhindered preparation in the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan, more than a thousand Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters take on the coalition forces in this remote and mountainous part of Afghanistan. Since then, the Taliban and other insurgent groups have mounted ongoing and increasingly frequent attacks against coalition forces, supporters and aid workers. The number of insurgent attacks is increased eleven fold in Helmand, Uruzgan and Kandahar provinces from 2003 to 2007.<sup>16</sup>

The dramatic increase in insurgent attacks is nested in a major insurgent offensive that began in the spring of 2006. This offensive is closely linked to the employment of task Forces (TF) Uruzgan and Helmand under Dutch and British commands respectively. These TFs comprise a series of new players in this violent and insecure part of Afghanistan, such as the United Kingdom, Holland, Australia, Denmark and Estonia. The Taliban seek to give the new ISAF troop contributors to the southern Afghan theater a bloody start in order for the politicians of these countries to break and call for a swift extraction. This effect has not materialized.

### Geography

The Hindu Kush Mountains divides Afghanistan from the northeast to the west. The country is further divided into three significant regions, the central highlands; the northern plains and the southern plateau. The 2500 km long border with Pakistan entails non permissive mountain ranges which cover the western border region with Pakistan

entails some significant crossing points into the North Western Frontier Region (NWFR) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of western Pakistan. These crossing points facilitate cross border operations and further provide the opportunity of utilizing the NWFR and FATA as safe havens for insurgents operating inside Afghanistan.

The Afghan environment is under enormous pressure. Over the past two to three decades, the country has lost more than 70 % of its forested areas as the wood is used as fuel and building material. Soil fertilization is rapidly declining and the water tables have fallen.<sup>17</sup> A further and more present danger throughout the Afghan countryside is the extensive presence of landmines. It is still estimated that more than one million mines lay scattered throughout the Afghan countryside. The presence of this significant number of mines is endangering farmers and further restricting the utilization of the land. The decline in soil fertilization is regarded extremely important for the international community to deal with as farming is the main source of income in the country.<sup>18</sup>

The Afghan climate is extreme. There are very cold winters as well as very hot summers. The Afghan – Pakistan border region is affected by the monsoon, which brings lots of rain and humidity to the region in the summer and early fall. In the winter period, this region is heavily influenced by cold weather coming from the north. The winter season heavily limits the passability of the border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan and also limits the ability to conduct cross border operations in this area.<sup>19</sup>

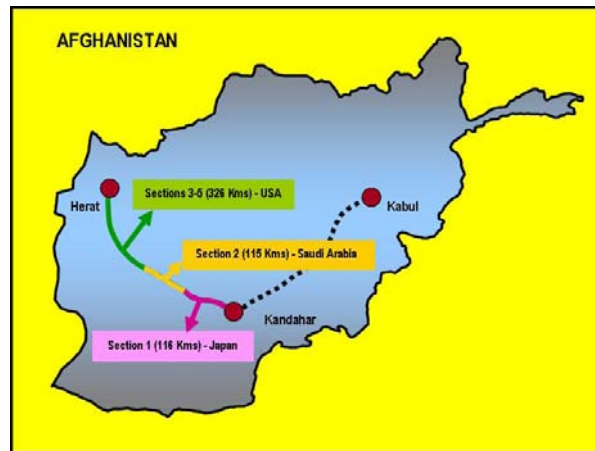


Figure 5. Highway One.

Source: United States Agency for International Development, US AID, accessed on 02 November 2007 at <sup>1</sup><http://www.usaid.gov/oig/public/fy06rpts/5-306-06-005-p.pdf>.

The infrastructure in Afghanistan has suffered severely from thirty years of war. Currently, there are numerous projects under way to restore the electricity, grid, road networks, schools, wells and irrigation facilities. There is one major ground line of communication (LOC), Highway One, also known as the Ring Road. This road connects the major cities of the country, from Mazar-E-Sharif in the north, through Kabul and Kandahar in the central and southern regions and further to Herat in the west.<sup>20</sup> In 2007, the Kandahar Herat stretch of the ring road is undergoing major reconstruction increasing the ability to conduct ground movement, see figure 5. This road absorbs all major logistical ground movements by the Coalition forces or contractors hired by the coalition, making it relatively easy for the insurgents to obtain intelligence with regards to procedures, timings etc. The ground LOCs in the remaining parts of Afghanistan is limited to partially passable truck trails which in the mountains shift into donkey trails only passable on foot or donkey.



In Afghanistan, there are numerous airports and airfields scattered throughout the countryside. The major cities have relatively well developed airfields capable of handling C-130 equivalent size airplanes. Furthermore, there are more than 40 minor airfields with varying capability. Many of these are under reconstruction funded by international organizations.<sup>21</sup> Due to the limitations of the rough terrain, air transportation to a large extent is the only way to get to some of the more remote parts of the country.

### Demographics

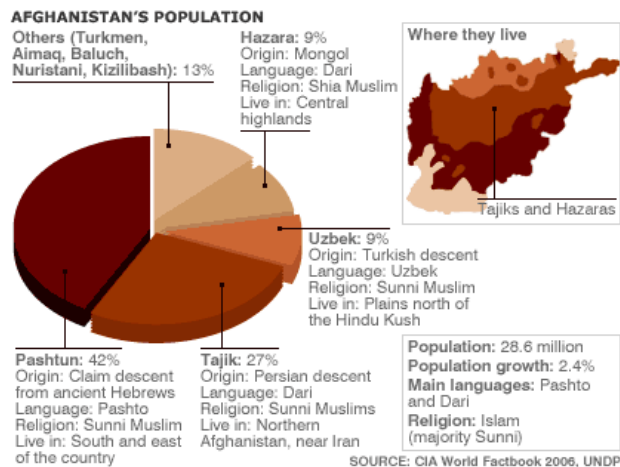


Figure 6. Afghanistan Demographics.

Source: British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC World News, accessed on 02 November 2007, at <http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/2>.

Afghanistan is a multi ethnic country with the Afghan population composed of numerous ethnic groups and numbering around 29 million totals. The population is scattered throughout the 34 provinces as depicted on figure 6. As no systematic census has been held in decades due to the security situation, the numbers are only estimates.<sup>22</sup>

Figure 6 clearly depicts how the Pashto population is massed in the border areas to Pakistan in the east through the southern parts of the country to the western border to

Iran. Furthermore, the figure shows the division between Sunni and Shia Muslims in the country. In Afghanistan, more than 99% of the population is Muslim, with approximately 82 % being Sunni and the remainder being Shia. The last 1% is divided between Hindu, Buddhist and Christianity.<sup>23</sup>

### Ethnicity and Cross Border Ethnicity

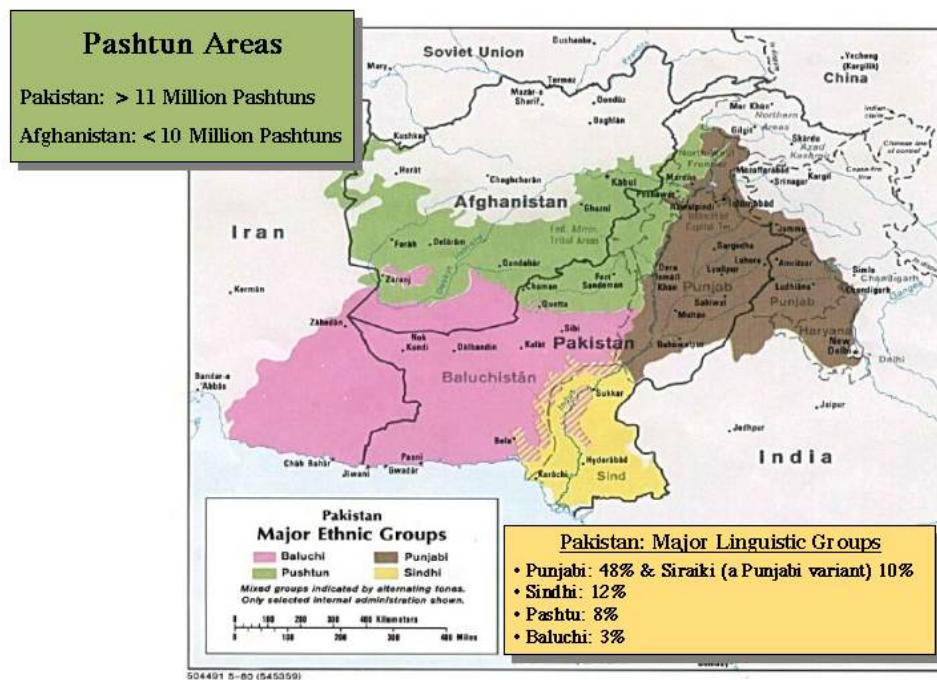


Figure 7. Cross Border Ethnicity in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Source: Defence and the National Interest, accessed on 30 October 2007 at [http://www.d-n-i.net/charts\\_data/pashtunistan](http://www.d-n-i.net/charts_data/pashtunistan).

The matter of ethnicity and specifically cross border ethnicity is regarded one of the most significant causes of the current conflict in Afghanistan. Although there are cross border ethnicities in the border regions with Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, it is the areas bordering Pakistan that are of the utmost interest. It is in these

regions, as depicted above, where the predominant part of the population is Pashto.

Figure 7 depicts how the Durand line divides the Pashto and Baluchi tribes occupying the border region. Recent studies indicate that the number of Pashtuns is bigger in Pakistan, 12 million, than in Afghanistan, 11 million.<sup>24</sup> The Pashtuns living in the border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan are united by faith, language, tribal codes and behavior focused around honor, vengeance, hospitality and *quam*.<sup>25</sup> The Pashtunwali, comprising the values and social norms predominates in these regions.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore the utilization of the Jirga, the council of elders, to resolve any problems is common to the Pashtuns.<sup>27</sup> Usually, the decision of the Jirga promotes payment of blood money and compromise.

The significance of the cross border ethnic issue on the Afghan borders with Pakistan increases dramatically during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan partly due to the hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees seeking shelter in the NWFP and the FATAs, partly because the then Pakistani Prime Minister Zia Ul Haq wished to Islamize Pakistan in the mid 1980s.<sup>28</sup> The Afghan refugee camps along with the fundamentalist religious schools, madrassas, of the NWFP and the FATAs become the perfect recruiting grounds for the Mujahedin fighting the Russians in Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup> Presently, the same refugee camps, which from the outside resembles small villages with characteristics as more or less permanent installations, and the madrassas again function as recruiting grounds, however, now the beneficiary is the Taliban and Al Qaeda organizations fighting the Coalition forces inside Afghanistan.

The codes by which the Pashtun tribes live are important in understanding how and why the support for the Taliban is maintained in this border region of Afghanistan

and Pakistan. According to these deeply rooted codes, tribal, ethnic and religious relations are far more important than any societal links made by a far away government in either Kabul or Islamabad.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, when the Afghan government, heavily influenced by foreign powers, moves on and openly supports the fight against the tribal brothers, it just instigates even deeper opposition amongst the fellow Pashtuns of the NWFP, and the FATAs.<sup>31</sup> Therefore many believe that the Pakistani government only possesses very limited ability to extend influence in these regions. The tribal approach toward the Pakistani military forces as yet another alien invader further builds to the complexity of this issue.<sup>32</sup>

### Economy

In the 1930s, Afghanistan embarks on a modest economic development program. The government founds banks; introduces paper money; establishes a university; expands primary, secondary, and technical schools; and send students abroad for education.<sup>33</sup> However, the 1979 Soviet invasion and the following civil war destroy the Afghan infrastructure and also the economy. Since 2001, the Afghan economy has risen and in 2004 and 2005 the GDP grow some average 15%.<sup>34</sup> However, this significant rise in GDP largely is due to an increase in foreign aid. Afghanistan is still widely dependent on foreign financial assistance.

The main source of income in Afghanistan is agriculture despite the fact that only 12% of the land is arable and that currently only 6% is cultivated. Due to very limited irrigation facilities, the Afghan agriculture relies on winter snows and spring rains in order for the crops to grow. Therefore, plans to share the water from the Afghan rivers are crucial to the agriculture. In 2003, Afghanistan has the largest wheat harvest in 25

years; however it is still necessary to import more than one million tons of wheat as estimated millions of Afghans are dependent on food aid.<sup>35</sup>

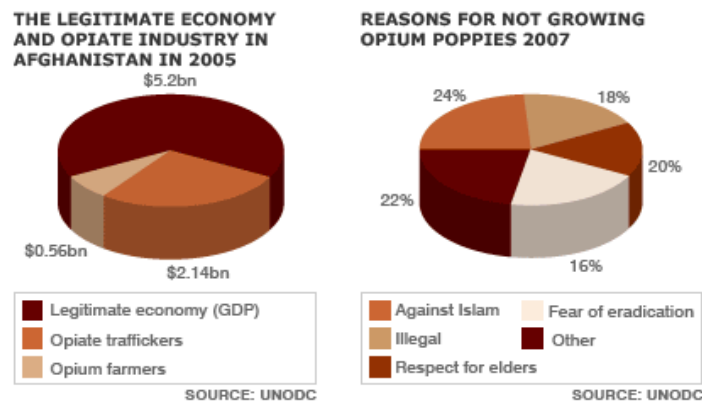


Figure 8. Afghan Economy

Source: British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC World News, accessed on 02 November 2007, at <http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/2>.

In Afghanistan the production of opium has become a way for many farmers to survive, figure 8 refers. The poppy is easy to grow and when harvested, very easy to transport, a significant factor in a country with very limited functional infrastructure. A large part of the Afghan opium crop is refined into heroin and is either consumed locally or exported to primarily Western Europe. Afghanistan supplies more than 90 % of the world's opium in 2006 despite the fact that a significant counter narcotics program is launched in late 2005 and that the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) increases deployments to former opium safe havens in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan. See appendix A.<sup>36</sup>

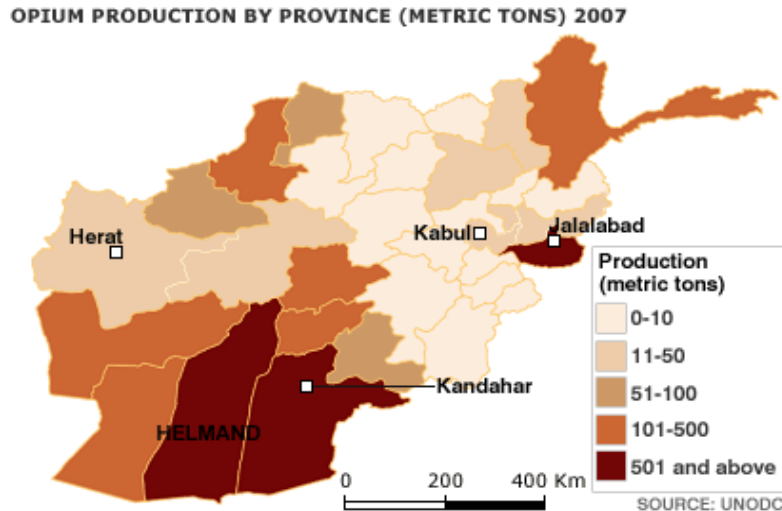


Figure 9. Afghan Opium Production

*Source:* British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC World News, accessed on 02 November 2007, at <http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/2>.

There are significant natural resources, such as natural gas, petroleum, coal, copper, zinc, lead and a number of semiprecious stones available in Afghanistan. However, the unstable security situation makes it difficult to mine these resources. Trade in smuggled goods on the other hand is still believed to be an important part of Afghan economy.<sup>37</sup> The unemployment issue in Afghanistan is yet another significant issue with regards to the ongoing insurgency. The current unemployment rate in Afghanistan exceeds 40% of the population a significant part of which are younger males. Many of the fighters supporting the insurgency are in it because it is the only way to make a living.<sup>38</sup> Fighting for an insurgent commander provides the young unemployed males with a source of income and social status.

### Governmental Institutions.

The Afghan central government residing in the capital Kabul is headed by Hamid Karzai, a Pashtun, elected in the fall of 2004. The 2004 presidential election is followed by provincial elections in the fall of 2005, turnout an estimated 53%<sup>39</sup>, officially terminating the transitional phase Afghanistan had been in since the Taliban was ousted in late 2001.<sup>40</sup> Administratively, Afghanistan is divided into thirty four provinces, each with its own capital. The provinces are further divided into a number of districts.<sup>41</sup> Within each of the provinces, a Governor is appointed by the Afghan Minister of Interior. The Governor then appoints the leaders of each district, also known as prefects. Furthermore the Governor is the representative for the Afghan central government in Kabul.<sup>42</sup> With regards to law enforcement in the provinces, the provincial Chief of Police appointed by the Ministry of Interior is directly responsible.

In theory, Afghanistan is a unitary state; all political authority is vested in the government in Kabul.<sup>43</sup> The powers and responsibilities of the provincial and district administrations are determined by the central government. However, in reality the situation is somewhat different. Throughout the country, there are provinces which have considerable authority over their own decision making and which basically do not follow the directives from the central government in Kabul primarily due to lack of belief in the capability of the government to extend influence beyond the city limits of Kabul, which again is founded in the Afghan governments failure to legitimize its own existence.<sup>44</sup> The issue of a strong centralized government versus a decentralized power is one of the most important issues when trying to solve the current situation within Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, power is traditionally decentralized, founded in strong local structures and in regional power holders. Failure on the international community's part to acknowledge the importance of these structures results in an Afghan government struggling to extend influence beyond Kabul.<sup>45</sup> If and when the government is capable of providing social services, jobs and security to the population throughout the thirty four provinces, through the use of mainly Afghan Security Forces (ASF), it will increase the legitimacy of the Karzai led central government. However, if the government keeps founding its existence on the heavy international support, there is a good chance that Hamid Karzai will continue to remain "the mayor of Kabul" as opposed to President of Afghanistan and only for as long as the International community has a heavy military presence in Afghanistan. The fact of the matter is that the insurgency currently is taking the place of the Afghan government in providing social services, and security in several districts and provinces. The insurgency hereby legitimizes itself in providing for the local populace, defending the local farmer's opium fields and then buying the crops.<sup>46</sup>

The creation of the United Front of Afghanistan (UNF) in early 2007 consists of a number of the primary Afghan power brokers such as Rashid Dostum, Karim Kahlilli and former President Rabbani,<sup>47</sup> is a further blow to the current government. The UNF purpose is to marginalize President Karzai as well as the formation of a viable alternative to the Taliban should this be needed. The mere creation of the UNF is undermining the legitimacy of President Karzai. Adding to the undermining of the legitimacy of the Afghan government is the subsequent decision by the Afghan parliament to offer amnesty to leaders accused for war crimes.<sup>48</sup> With this amnesty, the government approves of



horrible actions conducted especially during the 1992-1996 civil wars by some of the current most influential figures in Afghan politics.

According to Human Rights Watch, these individuals include Vice President Karim Khalili, Army Chief of Staff Abdul Rashid Dostum, Energy Minister Ismail Khan, parliamentarians Abdul Rasul Sayyaf and Mohammed Qasim Fahim and former President Burhanuddin Rabbani.<sup>49</sup> Awarding these individuals amnesty, regardless of the power they possess, just adds to the decrease in legitimacy of a government which despite heavy international support is not capable of bringing some of the allegedly worst war criminals to justice.

#### External Support

The external influence in Afghanistan is aimed at both the Afghan government and the insurgency and involves several foreign nations as well as international organizations. External support for the Afghan government is significant and is in fact what keeps the government in power. The support materializes in many different forms; security, financial, political as well as humanitarian assistance, with the main effort being security.<sup>50</sup> The external security support provided by ISAF, led by NATO and the United States. Currently, the Coalition numbers approximately 45,000 troops, scattered all over Afghanistan.<sup>51</sup> The primary roles of the foreign forces are to create a secure and stable environment serving as a base for further development of Afghanistan.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, the standing up of the Afghan National Army (ANA) is another very important task undertaken by ISAF and the United States. Currently the ANA numbers some 30,000 troops and the ANA conducts combined operations alongside ISAF and US troops.<sup>53</sup>

The presence of ISAF and the US forces is a prerequisite for conducting the much needed nation building within Afghanistan, and presently it can be argued that the forces from NATO and the United States are the only functioning security forces within Afghanistan. Despite recent examples of the ANA conducting independent operations at company level, the capability of the ANA to carry out missions without Coalition support is extremely limited. The ANA is still relying heavily on coalition support especially with regards to close air support, fire support and logistics. The limited capability of the ANA and the continuous requirement for coalition support further questions the legitimacy of the Afghan government amongst the Afghan populace, as it lends the impression of the government being a puppet for the Coalition forces.

The financial support for Afghanistan is significant with the United States and the European Union (EU) as the main contributors. Besides direct support from the EU and the United States, The World Bank establishes the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) in 2002, which more than 20 independent nations support.<sup>54</sup> The ARTF supports the structural costs of the Afghan government as well as national investment programs. Currently, the international community is increasing its financial support in an attempt to further enhance reconstruction efforts. However, it is of great importance that the financial support to Afghanistan focuses around reconstruction and poverty issues over military issues in order to better the living conditions for the populace and thereby build legitimacy for the Afghan government.<sup>55</sup>

The external political support for the current Afghan government is significant. The EU, besides financial support, commits a special envoy to deal with the government locally and establishes an Afghanistan Reconstruction Steering Group.<sup>56</sup> The EU political

support is further confirmed through President Karzai's visit to Brussels in the summer of 2005.<sup>57</sup> The United States and Afghanistan initiates a strategic partnership in 2005 aimed at developing democracy, and human rights in Afghanistan. Further, President Karzai visits the United States on a number of occasions since assuming power in 2001.<sup>58</sup> Finally UN support for President Karzai and the Afghan government is reaffirmed as late as in SEP 2007 during Karzai's visit to the UN general assembly.<sup>59</sup> Apart from afore mentioned Western actors, nations like Iran and Pakistan have publicly expressed their support for the Afghan government and have reaffirmed this support through meetings with President Karzai.

Six years after the Taliban is ousted, Afghanistan is still very much relying on outside assistance with regards to feeding the populace. One of the major actors is the World Food Program (WFP), who in 2006/2007 provided humanitarian assistance to more than 5 million Afghans.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, WFP has initiated food for education and food for work programs where children and families are provided food in order to have the children stay in school instead of being sent of to work.<sup>61</sup>

External support to the insurgency in Afghanistan focuses on support received from Pakistan, China, Iran and the Arab world. Although Pakistan officially halted any support of the Taliban organization in 2001 upon becoming one of the US most important allies in the Global War on Terror (GWOT), it appears Pakistan is still providing passive as well as some active support for the organization. The Pakistani Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) keeps supporting the Taliban with regards to materiel, recruitment, training and sanctuaries. Several reports on serving or former ISI operatives and Pakistani Army officers recruiting and training personnel for guerilla warfare inside Afghanistan

have surfaced.<sup>62</sup> The continued Pakistani support feed the thought of Pakistan not being interested in a strong Afghanistan. A strong Afghanistan as the western neighbor of Pakistan is seen as a destabilizing factor and a threat to the Pakistani NSS, as it is believed that Afghanistan then will focus on the Durand line and Pashtunistan issues.<sup>63</sup>

The Pashtun tribal areas covering the Afghan – Pakistani border region provides perfect insurgent safe havens. The non permissive mountainous terrain further makes it difficult for the coalition forces inside Afghanistan to counter the cross border activities. The ungoverned populace inside the Pakistani FATA is very open about their support of the Taliban and Al Qaeda as well as their contempt for the west and especially the US.<sup>64</sup>

The several thousand madrassas inside Pakistan, especially the Diobandi madrassas,<sup>65</sup> are key to the Taliban and Al Qaeda with respect to recruiting young males to join the fight in Afghanistan.<sup>66</sup> The students in these madrassas are typically young very poor males from the FATA's and Afghanistan seeking a meaning of life and an education. They are often referred to as the legacy of General Zia Ul Haq, former Pakistani President, who imposed the radical term of Islam on Pakistan.<sup>67</sup> Despite the fact that Iran and the Taliban has been opponents since the Taliban executed nine Iranian diplomats in Mazar e Sharif in 1998, it is in Iran's interest to have an unstable Afghanistan in order to counter a situation with strong US presence on both the western and eastern borders. In lieu of the present global political environment, it appears that Iran will support anyone who is against the United States. During 2006 and 2007, reports of increased Iranian activities inside the western provinces of Afghanistan have increased significantly especially with regards to criminal activities.<sup>68</sup> These activities serve the purpose of destabilizing Afghanistan. Furthermore, Iranian supplies of weapons heading

for the Pakistani – Afghan border region have been intercepted by coalition forces inside Afghanistan on several occasions.<sup>69</sup>

In the fall of 2007, US forces discovers a large 10 ton weapons cache in Afghanistan's western Herat province. The cache contains a broad variety of Chinese produced weaponry, including HN5 surface to air missiles as well as shaped charges for use when producing Improved Explosive Devices (IED). Whether or not China has any knowledge of that specific cache or the types of ordnance within it is unclear; however, the United States has expressed concern as to the increasing amount of new Chinese hardware found on captured or killed Taliban members.<sup>70</sup>

The financial support from several Arab donors still seems to be in effect according to reports from the ranks of the Taliban.<sup>71</sup> Apart from the Arab donors, the intelligence agencies of Russia, Iran and Pakistan allegedly are providing the Taliban with significant funding although specific amounts are not reported.<sup>72</sup> The financial support is routed through the "hawala" money trafficking system. This system handles an average of about 5-6 billion USD a year coming from outside donors.<sup>73</sup> The great advantage of this system from a Taliban and Al Qaeda perspective is that the money becomes untraceable due to the fact that there are no records or bureaucracy involved in the money transfers.<sup>74</sup>

### Insurgency Strategy.

It is a general perception that the insurgency in Afghanistan is made up by Taliban and Al Qaeda. However, the situation is somewhat more complicated. The Taliban is only estimated to make up approximately a quarter of the overall insurgents in Afghanistan.<sup>75</sup> The remainder is formed up by Al Qaeda, local farmers protesting the

inflexible government opium eradication program, opponents of President Karzai and finally local leaders guarding their own financial areas of interest.<sup>76</sup> Fortunately for the COIN effort, the insurgency does not appear likely to be unified and perhaps even an internal insurgent rivalry can play out as an advantage for the COIN effort on a long term basis.

There is significant evidence to suggest that the insurgency benefits from safe havens along the Afghan – Pakistani border, primarily in the NWFP, FATA's and Baluchistan. The insurgency is initially covered by the Pashtun tribal codes in effect within these areas. The 'pashtunwali' simply derives around the obligation the Pashtuns have to be hospitable, even to their enemies if necessary.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, the fact that there is increasing sympathy for the fight the insurgency are bringing on in Afghanistan is granting the insurgents the freedom of movement within the border region to rest, train and prepare for future operations within Afghanistan.

The geographical expansion of the insurgency causes some concern to the Coalition forces operating in Afghanistan. Whereas the fighting typically has taken place in the southern and eastern regions of Afghanistan, the insurgent is increasingly launching operations in the provinces close to Kabul as well as in the western provinces of Herat, Farah and Nimroz. On several occasions, United States Special Forces operating in the provinces of Farah and Nimroz are engaging insurgent groupings and further north around Herat, Italian and Spanish ISAF forces are engaged in sporadic fighting.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, in 2007 the insurgency launched operations in the northern parts of Afghanistan, previously known to be relatively safe, targeting ISAF forces in the vicinity of Konduz with suicide attacks and roadside bombs.<sup>79</sup>

Expanding the insurgency geographically is regarded a significant threat to the entire COIN effort in Afghanistan. At this point in time, the Coalition forces are close to being overstretched, having trouble holding on to the territorial gains. Furthermore, by targeting the typically “softer” mandated German, Italian and Spanish ISAF forces in northern and western Afghanistan, the insurgents are targeting what is believed to be ISAF centre of gravity – cohesion.

The insurgency’s ability to hold and/or re claim territory is a significant and rather unpleasant surprise for ISAF, especially in the southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar where coalition forces have experienced intense fighting since NATO took command of that area in 2006. Several townships and entire districts have been under direct insurgency control. When ISAF operations are launched and the territory is occupied, the Coalition forces have found themselves targeted with very intense and enduring counterattacks, often resulting in tactical retreats. Areas around Musa Qalah, Kajaki and Sangin in Helmand province and townships immediately south and west of Kandahar have seen insurgents capable of holding ground or even re-take lost ground at times throughout 2006 and 2007.

In relation to the opium production and drug trafficking, the insurgents are finding these areas as being very important with regards to funding of insurgent activities.<sup>80</sup> Local farmers pay taxes to the insurgents in order to be protected against the Afghan government and ISAF’s counter drug activities and at the same time the insurgents are guarding convoys of opium being exported to neighboring countries such as Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.<sup>81</sup>

The current insurgency recruits its fighters from the thousands of madrassas in Pakistan and to some extent amongst the male Afghan population primarily from the more poor rural areas. A majority of the recruits are from the NWFP or FATA's of Pakistan, typical young and unemployed males. One of the reasons for the apparent ease with which people are recruited is that the madrassas provide shelter and food and a Koran based education as opposed to no food and no education in their home towns.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, the recruitment is ongoing in the Afghan refugee camps in the NWFP and the FATAs which were established back in the 1980s during the war against the Soviets. These camps have become more or less permanent structures in the region and hereby also believed to be permanent suppliers of Taliban recruits.<sup>83</sup>

The insurgency in Afghanistan must be viewed in a regional perspective in connection with the developments in the western regions of Pakistan especially the FATA. The FATA has historically been left to govern itself with little or no interference from Islamabad. Recently large groups of young men have overrun numerous towns in the FATA and imposed strict Islamic rule and the local populace are simply unable to resist.<sup>84</sup> In these tribal areas and especially in the Waziristan agency, Taliban and Al Qaeda are allowed absolute freedom of maneuver. Therefore, the sights of decapitated bodies lying in the streets with notes stating that the individual was a US spy are not uncommon.<sup>85</sup> Several tribal leaders in the FATA are not supporting these actions by the Taliban and Al Qaeda; however, they have no means of protecting their own families, let alone resist Taliban and Al Qaeda actions.

An imminent solution to the safe havens in the western regions of Pakistan initiated by Pakistan is not likely. In September 2006, following two years of heavy



fighting, the FATA's and the Pakistani government signed a peace agreement.<sup>86</sup> The agreement, still in effect although not regarded effective, was initiated by the Pakistani government as a result of a flawed military attempt to gain control over the FATA's. The mere fact that an agreement of this kind was signed clearly depicts the complexity of this issue and the difficulty related to finding a solution to the problem. Meanwhile, the FATA continue to serve as safe haven and territory basically under Taliban and Al Qaeda control.

### COIN Strategy

This section discusses the counterinsurgency strategy executed by Afghan, ISAF and US forces in Afghanistan through the application of the diplomatic, informational, military and economic instruments of national power. In general, the COIN effort in Afghanistan focuses around creating a secure environment, hereby setting the conditions for further reconstruction efforts to be executed.

The diplomatic instrument of national power is predominantly being applied through Coalition negotiations with Pakistan, internally in Pakistan as well as negotiations between Coalition forces. Furthermore, attempts have been made to meet with the insurgents; however, the Taliban has declined any such offers to conduct meetings with the Afghan government as long as foreign forces are present in Afghanistan.<sup>87</sup>

In the fall of 2006, the then ISAF commander, General David Richards visited Pakistan in order to seek Pakistan support for closing down the insurgent safe havens in the FATA's.<sup>88</sup> Before leaving Afghanistan for the meeting it appeared that the ISAF commander's intent was to demand Pakistani action on ISAF proof of ISI involvement in

training Taliban in camps inside the FATA's. However, in what could be regarded an application of UK national security policy, General Richards ended up praising the Pakistani support for the NATO operations inside Afghanistan. The reason for this sudden change in mood could be that the UK intelligence service MI6 and the Pakistani ISI are in close cooperation as to identifying any future threats to UK homeland security rendering a hard approach by the ISAF commander inappropriate and not in the national interest of the UK.<sup>89</sup> This example indicates the diplomatic difficulties when dealing with Coalition forces, in that national interests of the troop contributing nations can be opposite to those of the Coalition. This further adds to the complexity and magnitude of the COIN effort and enhances the risk of not reaching any significant diplomatic results.

The establishment of both the Policy Action Group (PAG) and the Tripartite Commission are regarded strong diplomatic efforts in the attempt to deal with both the cross border insurgency operations as well as the counter drug issues. The PAG meets on a weekly basis and has President Karzai, the ISAF commander and other very influential individuals as permanent members. The PAG is a vital step in coordinating and maximizing the efforts of all the players in the COIN fight.<sup>90</sup> The Tripartite Commission focuses around enhancing the border security between Afghanistan and Pakistan, having as permanent members the top Afghan, Pakistan and international military commanders.<sup>91</sup> This Commission is viewed as a very important tool in coordinating the efforts to counter the cross border incursions into Afghanistan.

In early 2007, the US Vice President traveled to Pakistan in order to meet with President Musharraf. The purpose of the trip was to apply diplomatic pressure on Pakistan, in order to have Pakistan generate more military effort into denying the Taliban

and Al Qaeda safe havens in the remote areas of the FATAs . However, Musharraf insisted that the negotiations of 2006 with the tribes in the FATA as well as financial aid to the region are the way forward. The Coalition is walking a fine line as pressure applied on President Musharraf can prove to be very counterproductive with regards to regional stability.

President Musharraf is dealing with serious issues within Pakistan with regards to holding back the radical Islamists from destabilizing Pakistan further. Furthermore, elections are coming up in the near future which is why it is pertinent that Musharraf is depicted as an independent and strong leader not giving in to Coalition pressure, risking being depicted as a western puppet. When attempting to understand the Pakistani approach to the situation in Afghanistan and the western parts of Pakistan, it is important to raise the issue of the priorities of Pakistan's National Security Strategy (NSS). Pakistan does not necessary find the dealings with the Afghan insurgency as the top priority. Instead it is believed that Pakistan's primary security concern is to the east, towards India.<sup>92</sup> The Pakistani NSS drives the prioritization of the procurement of larger weapon systems as opposed to equipment needed throughout the Frontier Corps, the military organization policing the NWFP and the FATA's. The Frontier Corps is in immediate need of equipment such as new rifles, night vision capabilities and other personal equipment.<sup>93</sup>

Despite these issues it is a diplomatic achievement that the recent tribal peace Jirga, executed in august 2007 in Afghanistan, saw the participation of both Karzai and Musharraf. The Pakistani President not only attended the meeting but also addressed the issue of Taliban and Al Qaeda operating out of safe havens inside the FATA's and

Baluchistan.<sup>94</sup> This meeting is a step in the right direction; however, any diplomatic steps taken within the FATA's must be Pakistani and by no means foreign, as foreign involvement will only lead to further destabilization.

The diplomatic instrument of national power is constantly being applied within NATO ranks. Since October 2006 when NATO assumed command over the entire Afghanistan mission, on going discussions regarding troop contributions and national caveats have been part of the diplomatic dealings within the alliance. NATO has agreed upon an overall strategy for Afghanistan; however, the validity of such a strategy is suffering from these national caveats. This constant state of uncertainty with regards to the commitment of the individual member nations is regarded extremely counterproductive and at the same time displays the COIN Center of Gravity, that being ISAF/NATO cohesion.

The informational instrument of national power is being applied by both ISAF and the US conducting counterinsurgency operations inside Afghanistan. Broadcasts in television and radio as well as information leaflets are being handed out to the populace explaining the purpose and goals of the coalition forces. Furthermore, coalition forces are frequently being accompanied by journalists on COIN missions throughout the country in an attempt to promote the COIN cause. However, the informational instrument of national power is being applied in a too passive and reactive fashion.

The informational instrument of national power should be focused around counter-information campaigns which constantly de-legitimizes the insurgency and very clearly portrays the consequences of a failing COIN effort.<sup>95</sup> These campaigns must be constantly executed and coordinated with especially financial, reconstruction,

humanitarian aid and security missions. Furthermore, the fact that ISAF basically only reaches the news when coalition forces suffer casualties is a significant indication of a failed application of the informational instrument of national power.

Finally, the open disagreement as to the use of airpower portrayed throughout the world press, between President Karzai and the coalition, is regarded as a two-edged sword. The dispute assists President Karzai in portraying himself and the Afghan government as anything but western puppets.<sup>96</sup> However, at the same time it delegitimizes the coalition and coalition operations in Afghanistan and therefore the entire COIN effort.

The military instrument of national power is the main effort for the foreign COIN efforts in Afghanistan.<sup>97</sup> Currently ISAF and the United States have deployed some 45,000 troops to Afghanistan. These troops are arrayed throughout the country in accordance with ISAF's expansion strategy.<sup>98</sup> The application of the military instrument of national power focuses around coalition forces conducting offensive ground operations in close cooperation with ASF. The ground operations are heavily supported by airpower, especially in the close air support and precision strike role.<sup>99</sup>

The military instrument of national power is the main effort in NATO's "ink-spot" strategy initiated back in 2002.<sup>100</sup> This strategy basically has the Coalition forces enter an area, clear it, hold it and allow for follow on civilian military cooperation (CIMIC) to commence.<sup>101</sup> The strategy has proven difficult to implement. After Danish and British forces had held a former Taliban strong hold of Musa Qalah in Helmand province, it was handed over to the locals as a part of a negotiated deal with the local community, Taliban and ISAF. However, six months later, Musa Qalah was under

Taliban control and currently, ISAF is engaged in re-gaining control the town. Such situations can be viewed as result of a thin force structure not capable of holding the ground gained in offensive operations.

Apart from taking on security operations the military instrument of national power is also applied to counter drug enforcement and the mission of training the ASF. The fact that the relatively limited amount of forces covers this variety of tasks along with the primary task of establishing and maintaining a secure environment, in an AO the size of France, is the cause of significant frustration amongst a number of NATO contributing nations. However, there are no immediate signs of a change in the attitudes amongst the member states.

The current command structure, with a 34,000 strong ISAF conducting operations throughout Afghanistan and at the same time, some 8,000 US forces are under a separate US command.<sup>102</sup> This lack of unity of command and effort is a significant weakness of the coalition forces as it can be perceived as a lack of cohesion. Furthermore, it raises the issue of national interests over coalition or alliance interests and any discrepancy between the two can build mistrust within the alliance.<sup>103</sup> One way of mitigating these issues is to place all forces under the control of one commander. Unified command would add transparency to application of the military instrument of national power and build legitimacy within the local population and further remove an avenue of possible exploitation. Furthermore, the number of national caveats that the TCN bring to the coalition is limiting the full application of the military instrument of national power. Especially the limitation on troop movement within the ISAF AOR is a crucial caveat as it severely limits ISAF flexibility and ability to mass the force in space and time.

In the beginning of 2007, an important step in countering the cross border incursions from the FATAs was taken in the establishment of the Joint Intelligence Operations Centre (JIOC) in Afghanistan. The JIOC is manned by Afghan, Pakistani and ISAF personnel as it is regarded a significant achievement.<sup>104</sup> Since the establishment of the JIOC, United States forces operating in eastern Afghanistan have conducted a few and limited cross border operations into the FATA's in hot pursuit of insurgents.<sup>105</sup> Finally, the issue of establishing passive assets on the Afghan borders in order to counter the cross border incursions is still up for discussion. In 2006 and again in 2007, the Pakistani government proposed that a fence supported by minefields and surveillance equipment should be established on the Afghan-Pakistani border. However, the response from ISAF and the Afghan government has been negative, based on primarily humanitarian aspects.<sup>106</sup> Further, the Afghan reluctance to establish permanent structures on the Pakistani border is founded in the Durand line issue more than anything else in that Afghanistan never officially has recognized this as the official border separating the two countries.

The application of the economic instrument of national power has matured over the past six years. The economic support for the Afghan government, de facto, the Afghan population increases over the years and now amounts to several billion USD a year.<sup>107</sup> Upon looking at the funds being provided for projects in Afghanistan, there appears to be enough funding. However, what seems to be lacking is the ability to create the conditions to bring the money into effect and further the ability to choose the right projects. This lack of bringing the financial resources to bear hinders one of the most important tasks, mitigation of the Afghan poverty. Situations like this enhance the

perception of a coalition not really caring about the Afghans, which again de-legitimizes the ISAF and US effort and presence.

The general prioritization amongst the various instruments of national power does not seem to be in line with the requirements of the Afghan populace. Although it can be argued that the present application of the military instrument of national power is in order, the financial aid contribution does not add up. There is no doubt that the road to success is paved with incentives which reduces the poverty and enhances social services and education opportunities – and fast. In the eyes of the Afghan population, five years have gone by with only little to show.

The following and final chapter provides a comparison between the insurgencies in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan followed by the thesis conclusion and recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan. *Background Information*, available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5380.htm>, (accessed on 20 September 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Don Belt, *Struggle For The Soul of Pakistan*, National Geographic, Washington, September 2007, 42.

<sup>3</sup> Afghanistan. *The Seven Mujahedeen Factions*, available at <http://www.countrystuides.us>, (accessed on 02 August 2007).

<sup>4</sup> Afghanistan. *Background Information*, available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5380.htm>, (accessed on 05 August 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan*, Cambridge 2002, 277.

<sup>6</sup> The Council of seven had decided upon appointing Mujadidi as the new President in the summer of 1992.

<sup>7</sup> Afghanistan. *The Seven Mujahedeen Factions*, available at <http://www.countrystuides.us>, (accessed on 07 October 2007).



<sup>8</sup> Victoria Schofield, *Afghan Frontier, Feuding and fighting in Central Asia*, New York 2003, 333.

<sup>9</sup> Tanner, 275.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 279.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 280.

<sup>12</sup> Afghanistan. *The Seven Mujahedeen Factions*, available at <http://www.countrystuides.us>, (accessed on 07 October 2007).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 07 October 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 07 October 2007).

<sup>15</sup> Afghanistan, *President Karzai*, available at <http://www.fpc.state.gov>, (accessed on 05 October 2007).

<sup>16</sup> The New York Times, *International*, 12 August 2007, 11-13.

<sup>17</sup> Afghan Ministry of Agriculture and Food, *Sustainable land Management* 2007, Kabul 2007.

<sup>18</sup> Afghanistan. *The Seven Mujahedeen Factions*, available at <http://www.countrystuides.us>, (accessed on 10 August 2007).

<sup>19</sup> Afghanistan. *Fencing the Border*, available at [http://www.rferl.org/features/features\\_Article.aspx?m=10&y=2007&id=F11E7D19-8E39-4DD1-B12D-4BDA813B756D](http://www.rferl.org/features/features_Article.aspx?m=10&y=2007&id=F11E7D19-8E39-4DD1-B12D-4BDA813B756D), (accessed on 06 October 2007).

<sup>20</sup> Afghanistan. *Background Information*, available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5380.htm>, (accessed on 06 September 2007).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 06 September 2007).

<sup>22</sup> Afghanistan. *Demographics*, available at <http://www.experiencefestival.com/a/Afghanistan>, (accessed on 06 October 2007).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 06 October 2007).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 06 October 2007).

<sup>25</sup> In tribal areas *qaum* refers to a common genealogy from extended family, or clan, to tribe to tribal communities. Through *quam* security is provided to the individual.

<sup>26</sup> Afghanistan. *Regional Problem*, available at <http://www.rand.org/commentary/2007/07/04/UPI.html>, (accessed between 07 September – 10 November 2007).

<sup>27</sup> Afghanistan. *Country Profile*, available at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/country\\_profiles/1162668.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/country_profiles/1162668.stm), (accessed on 05 October 2007).

<sup>28</sup> Belt, 44.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>30</sup> Belt, 42.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>32</sup> Pakistan. *Pakistan's Tribal Areas*, available at <http://www.rand.org/commentary/122806IHT.html>, (accessed on 04 October 2007).

<sup>33</sup> Afghanistan. *Background Information*, available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5380.htm>, (accessed on 06 September 2007).

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 06 September 2007).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 06 September 2007).

<sup>36</sup> UK TF Helmand was stood up in the spring of 2006 consisting of some 7500 troops from UK, Denmark and Estonia.

<sup>37</sup> Afghanistan. *Background Information*, available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5380.htm>, (accessed on 07 September 2007).

<sup>38</sup> Barnett R. Rubin, *Saving Afghanistan*, Foreign affairs, June 2007, available at [www.foreignaffairs.org](http://www.foreignaffairs.org), (accessed on 18 October 2007).

<sup>39</sup> Afghanistan. *Background Information*, available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5380.htm>, (accessed on 07 September 2007).

<sup>40</sup> Afghanistan. *Afghan Government*, available at [http://www.afghanistanwatch.org/by\\_the\\_numbers/index.html](http://www.afghanistanwatch.org/by_the_numbers/index.html). (accessed on 07 October 2007).

<sup>41</sup> Afghanistan. *Background Information*, available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5380.htm>, (accessed on 05 August 2007).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 07 September 2007).

<sup>43</sup> Afghanistan. *Afghan Government*, available at [http://www.afghanistanwatch.org/by\\_the\\_numbers/index.html](http://www.afghanistanwatch.org/by_the_numbers/index.html)., (accessed on 07 October 2007).

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 07 October 2007).

<sup>45</sup> Afghanistan. *Counter Narcotics*, available at [http://www.senliscouncil.net/modules/publications/024\\_publication](http://www.senliscouncil.net/modules/publications/024_publication)., (accessed on 29 September 2007).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 29 September 2007).

<sup>47</sup> Pakistan. *Pakistan – Afghanistan Border*, available at <http://www.britannica.com/nations/Pakistan>., (accessed on 06 October 2007).

<sup>48</sup> Rahim Faiez, *Taliban*, Assosiated Press, 01 February 2007.

<sup>49</sup> Afghanistan, *Background*, available at <http://hrw.org/englishwr2k7/docs/2007/01/11/afghan14863.htm>.,(accessed on 29 September 2007).

<sup>50</sup> Afghanistan. *Counter Narcotics*, available at [http://www.senliscouncil.net/modules/publications/024\\_publication](http://www.senliscouncil.net/modules/publications/024_publication)., (accessed on 06 October 2007).

<sup>51</sup> Appendix C refers. (Map of ISAF expansion).

<sup>52</sup> Afghanistan. *NATOs Role in Afghanistan*, available at <http://www.hq.nato.int>., (accessed on 08 October 2007).

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 08 October 2007).

<sup>54</sup> Afghanistan. *Afghan Development*, available at <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,contentMDK:21314955~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>., (accessed on 06 October 2007).

<sup>55</sup> Afghanistan. *Counter Narcotics*, available at [http://www.senliscouncil.net/modules/publications/024\\_publication](http://www.senliscouncil.net/modules/publications/024_publication)., (accessed on 06 October 2007).

<sup>56</sup> Afghanistan. *EuropeAid in Afghanistan*, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/country-cooperation/afghanistan/afghanistan\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/country-cooperation/afghanistan/afghanistan_en.htm)., (accessed on 08 October 2007).

<sup>57</sup> Afghanistan. *Karzai Visit to Brussels*, available at <http://www.english.peopledaily.com>., (accessed on 04 October 2007).

<sup>58</sup> Afghanistan. *US and Afghan Cooperation*, available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/07/20070716-4.html>., (accessed on 06 October 2007).

<sup>59</sup> David Gollust, *Karzai at The UN*, United Nations, 23 September 2007.

<sup>60</sup> Afghanistan. *WFP Assessment*, available at <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/communications/wfp143990.pdf>.,(accessed on 08 October 2007).

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, (accessed on 08 October 2007).

<sup>62</sup> Afghanistan. *ISI Support to Taliban*, available at <http://www.newsday.com/services/newspaper/printedition/saturday/news/ny-world275434669oct27,0,1942951.story>., (accessed on 07 October 2007).

<sup>63</sup> Afghanistan. *Afghan – Pakistani Border*, available at [http://www.iht.com/articles/2004/01/12/edrubin\\_ed3\\_.php](http://www.iht.com/articles/2004/01/12/edrubin_ed3_.php)., (accessed on 10 November 2007).

<sup>64</sup> Philip Smucker, *Ungoverned Populace*, US news and world report, 09 April 2007.

<sup>65</sup> Diobandi is an austere interpretation of Islam which calls for a rejection of modernity and a return to the pure seventh century Islam in accordance with the Prophet Mohammed.

<sup>66</sup> Belt, 59.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>68</sup> Afghanistan. *NATOs COIN Strategy*, available at [http://jamestown.org/news\\_details.php?news\\_id=201](http://jamestown.org/news_details.php?news_id=201)., (accessed on 04 October 2007).

<sup>69</sup> Confirmed by US Special Forces Operator, at US Command and General Staff Course, May 2007.

<sup>70</sup> Afghanistan. *Chinese Weapons in Afghanistan*, available at <http://www.afgha.com/?q=node/4278>., (accessed on 08 October 2007).

<sup>71</sup> Afghanistan. *Donors of the Taliban*, available at <http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/0510/p06s01-wosc.html?page=2>., (accessed on 08 October 2007).

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, (accessed on 08 October 2007).

<sup>73</sup> Congressional research Service report, *Pakistan Significant Recent Events*, Washington DC, July 2007, page 62.

<sup>74</sup> Hawala – The operator of hawala is called a thadekar. When a person wishes to transfer money, one thadekar established contact to another thadekar, typically through an e-mail. Within minutes a reply will confirm whether there are money at hand to complete the transfer. A password is then shared between donor, resipient and the thadekars. The system is build over years and based on trust between the two thadekars.

<sup>75</sup> Rubin Barnett R., *Resolving the Pakistan-Afghanistan stalemate*, special report, US Institute for Peace, Washington D.C., 2006. 6.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>78</sup> Pakistan. *Pakistan – Afghanistan Border*, available at <http://www.britannica.com/nations/Pakistan.>, (accessed on 10 October 2007).

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 10 October 2007).

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 10 October 2007).

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 10 October 2007).

<sup>82</sup> Belt, 58.

<sup>83</sup> Briefing by COL Thomas P. Wilhelm, *The FATA's*, Fort Leavenworth, 30 March 2007.

<sup>84</sup> Aryn Baker, Time magazine, 02 April 2007, 28.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>86</sup> The peace agreement demanded Pakistani military Ops to halt and in turn foreign fighters within the FATA's would not be granted safe havens.

<sup>87</sup> Afghanistan. *Taliban Strategy*, available at [http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/10/19/world/main3384511.shtml?source=search\\_story](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/10/19/world/main3384511.shtml?source=search_story)., (accessed on 09 October 2007).

<sup>88</sup> Afghanistan. *ISAF Commander Visits Islamabad*, available at <http://www.signal.nationalinterest.in/>., (accessed on 02 October 2007).

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., (accessed on 02 October 2007).

<sup>90</sup> Afghanistan. *Policy Action Group*, available at <http://www.peacebuild.ca/powg/POM/afghanistan/AfghanistanGovernance.htm>., (accessed on 16 November 2007).

<sup>91</sup> Afghanistan. *Tripartite Commission*, available at <http://www.paktribune.com/news/index.shtml?152384>., (accessed on 17 November 2007).

<sup>92</sup> Briefing by COL Thomas P. Wilhelm, *The FATA's*, Fort Leavenworth, 30 March 2007.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Afghanistan. *NATO's COIN Strategy*, available at [http://jamestown.org/news\\_details.php?news\\_id=201](http://jamestown.org/news_details.php?news_id=201)., (accessed on 29 August 2007).

<sup>95</sup> Common Security and the Global War on Terror Land forces symposium, Pakistan, May 2007.

<sup>96</sup> Afghanistan. *Afghan Independence*, available at [http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/24/world/asia/24afghan.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/24/world/asia/24afghan.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)., (accessed on 03 October 2007).

<sup>97</sup> Appendix B refers.

<sup>98</sup> Appendix C refers.

<sup>99</sup> Afghanistan. *NATO's COIN Strategy*, available at [http://jamestown.org/news\\_details.php?news\\_id=201](http://jamestown.org/news_details.php?news_id=201)., (accessed on 04 October 2007).

<sup>100</sup> Appendix B refers.

<sup>101</sup> This strategy was not followed by NATO in the fall of 2007, when the Taliban strong hold of Musa Qalah was abandoned after Danish and British forces had held it for three months. Subsequently Taliban retook the town.

<sup>102</sup> Afghanistan. *ISAF Expansion*, available at <http://www.nato.int>., (accessed on 04 October 2007).

<sup>103</sup> Appendix B, refers.

<sup>104</sup> Afghanistan. *JPIC Establishment*, available at [http://www.af.mil/news/story\\_print.asp?id=123027551](http://www.af.mil/news/story_print.asp?id=123027551)., (accessed on 08 October 2007).

<sup>105</sup> Appendix B refers.

<sup>106</sup> Afghanistan. *Fencing the Border*, available at [http://www.rferl.org/features/features\\_Article.aspx?m=10&y=2007&id=F11E7D19-8E39-4DD1-B12D-4BDA813B756D](http://www.rferl.org/features/features_Article.aspx?m=10&y=2007&id=F11E7D19-8E39-4DD1-B12D-4BDA813B756D)., (accessed on 05 October 2007).

<sup>107</sup> The US provided some \$12 billion from 2001-2006. Further some \$8.2 billion is pledged in the period of 2004-2007 by international donors. Finally the World Bank who controls the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fond has more than \$ 2 billion targeted for reconstruction projects.

## CHAPTER 7

### Comparisons, Conclusion and Recommendations.

*The war in Afghanistan is principally caused by external interferences, in particular that of Pakistan and its regional strategic aims.  
Ahmad Shah Massoud, former Northern Alliance Commander*

This chapter provides a comparison of the Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan case studies and the major conclusion and recommendations of this thesis. The comparison covers the significant differences and similarities identified between the three cases. Finally, the chapter provides the answer to the primary research question; can counterinsurgency operations be successful, when the insurgents are operating from sanctuaries and staging areas in neighboring states? The narrative is supported by a table which provides an overview of the comparison. Appendix D refers.

One of the common denominators for the three case studies is the geographic features of the regions in which the cross border insurgencies were carried out. The terrain is typically non permissive and mountainous, which in general is advantageous to a combat force not relying on heavy weaponry and high tech ground mobility. However, if the crossing points within these non permissive areas are sealed, it seriously limits the insurgencies cross border support. In relation to sealing the borders a major difference between the case studies appear, that being the stretch of border which needs to be sealed. In Oman it was 288 km, in Kashmir 700 km, however, in Afghanistan 2500 km of border through a non permissive terrain will have to be sealed. This is viewed as an almost impossible task, especially due to the mountainous terrain which makes out significant parts of the border.



In Oman, the insurgency initially used the non permissive Jebali. The counterinsurgents initiated a physical blocking of the terrain through the construction of extensive minefields and concrete walls with barbed wire which forced the insurgency to change the modus operandi and subsequently led to their defeat. The Kashmiri geography along the Line of Control (LoC) is one of similar non permissive features as the Omani Jebali. Although there are parts of the LoC which are passable low land, the majority of the 700 km LoC runs through non permissive mountainous terrain encompassing numerous concealed crossing points. Indian attempts to seal the LoC resulted in decreased cross border activity from 1996 to the present day.

Due to the limited pass ability of the Durand Line dividing Afghanistan and Pakistan, cross border activities has to be carried out through primitive means on foot or through the use of mules. There are no permanent structures established to hinder access from one country to the other mainly due to the different attitudes towards the Durand line itself. Therefore, the border region largely enhances the possibility to conduct cross border operations by the insurgents.

The issue of cross border ethnicity is only considered relevant for the Kashmir and Afghanistan case studies, as there really was not any cross border ethnic ties between the population of the PDRY and the Jebalis fighting the Omani insurgency. In Kashmir the ethnic relations between the Muslims inside IAK and the predominant Pakistani Muslim population is one of the major drivers for both the official and unofficial support. The Muslims fleeing IAK set up in refugee camps in the northern parts of Pakistan has been a major contributor of recruits to the training camps situated within this region. In both the training and refugee camps, the young males from IAK have been exposed to the

battle hardened Muslim extremists who fought the Soviets and now the Coalition inside Afghanistan. This exposure has driven a spread of the idea of regional Muslim unification brought forward by the extremists.

When dealing with the current insurgency in Afghanistan, cross border ethnicity plays a significant role. The Durand Line divides the predominant Pashtu region in two. Both sides of the border are inhabited by Pashtu's who have no great desire of being governed centrally from either Kabul or Islamabad. Furthermore, most of the Pashtu's abide by the tribal laws which enforce the primary obligation toward the tribe as opposed to the country. Finally the cross border ethnicity is viewed as a major threat to Pakistan's survival as a nation, especially if a strong Afghanistan is established. Therefore this issue of Pakistan's future as a nation in lieu of the cross border ethnicity is essential to future COIN efforts within this region.

Once the Dhofari insurgency in Oman was offered education and healthcare and in general had their grievances limited, the support for the insurgency was diminished and ultimately, a deliberate and focused economic approach had proven an effective tool in countering the insurgency. In Kashmir the economic situation is somewhat different. The issue here is a significant unemployment rate among the younger male population, making them easy targets for insurgency recruitment. Furthermore, the majority of the economic efforts applied by India have been canalized into military operations as opposed to mitigating populace grievances. In Afghanistan, with more than 50% of the population living below the poverty rate and an unemployment rate of more than 40%, economic development is crucial in order to convince the population that the COIN effort

is working and to their benefit. On the other hand the current economic situation facilitates insurgency recruitment as seen in Kashmir.

When Sultan Qaboos assumed power in Oman, government legitimacy was built immediately. Sultan Qaboos was supported by most of the immediate neighbors in the fight against Marxism on the Arabian Peninsula. In Kashmir, the Indian government is very strong and legitimate, which is asserted as the major reason for the government to be able to carry out a long term COIN effort. This ability to uphold the long term engagement is also founded in the fact that the insurgency in IAK is basically limited to that geographic region and therefore has not impacted the Indian population outside IAK directly.

In Afghanistan, the current centralized government is weak with very limited ability to extend influence beyond the capital Kabul. The reason is tied to history as the Afghans have a tradition of tribal, decentralized ruling. Therefore, it is only natural that the Afghan population as a whole has only limited desire to abide by rules dictated from Kabul. The lack of legitimacy is further enhanced as the government fails to mitigate poverty, limit unemployment and provide security for the populace.

The insurgencies in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan all heavily rely on external support. Once the COIN brought a stop to the Dhofari external support, the insurgency folded. External support for the Sultan was crucial to COIN success and in the case of Oman, it materialized primarily through UK support; however, more countries became involved along the way, building the ever important legitimacy on the side of the government. The situation in Kashmir is very much alike the one in Oman as the insurgency is relying heavily on especially Pakistani support. If Pakistani support for the

insurgency ceased, the insurgency would no longer exist. External support for the Indian government has been limited although applied with significant impact. The decrease in insurgent activity since 2002 is a result of US diplomatic pressure applied on Pakistan.

In Afghanistan, the insurgency is heavily dependent on external support as well, both with regards to safe havens as well as financial, material and personnel support. External support from the international community is the single factor that keeps both the current peace in Afghanistan as well as the Afghan government in place. Were the current external support to be halted, it is not likely that the current Afghan government could remain in power.

The insurgency in Oman originated as an independence movement and turned into an ideological movement trying to promote Marxism on the Arabian Peninsula. The insurgency was limited in scope as it basically was contained to the Dhofar Mountains in the southern part of Oman, not really affecting the population in the Northern part of the country. The methods applied were focused on the SAF and the foreign forces as opposed to the populace. The Kashmir conflict is basically fought over religious issues of Hindu versus Muslim control of the region of IAK and PAK. As for the insurgents in Oman, the Kashmir insurgency has focused upon the security forces within IAK not taking the conflict to the remainder of India. This lack of insurgent activity throughout the country can naturally also be linked to the efforts of the Indian government. However, the insurgency has developed its regional ties over time through the involvement of former Mujahedeen fighters from the Afghan – Soviet war.

The insurgency in Afghanistan is ethnic founded in the Pashto fight against the rest of the ethnic groupings within the country. When the Taliban assumed power in

1996, they moved the powerbase from Kabul to the Pashto heartland and Kandahar in the south. However, the insurgency has developed into a regional conflict with close ties to the ungoverned western regions of Pakistan and the extremism depicted throughout Pakistan. Furthermore the Al Qaeda fighters operating in this region are from all over Asia and the Middle East, further feeding to the expanding scope of the insurgency.

The COIN effort in Oman is rather limited in scope and simple to execute in comparison with both Kashmir and Afghanistan. These factors are essential to the relative ease with which the success of the COIN was secured. One of the major reasons for keeping the insurgency contained is that the COIN did not allow the media access to the Dhofar region. In Kashmir, the Indian approach has raised eyebrows throughout the world's human rights organizations. This uproar is mainly due to reports on brutality towards the local populace carried out by the more than 600,000 troops present in Kashmir. The Indian has succeeded in shutting off the conflict to the outside world allowing only little or no presence of the independent free media. In Afghanistan, an insufficient troop level is already proving difficult to negotiate around as ISAF has increasing difficulties in holding gained ground. The COIN strategy has only recently begun to assume regional perspectives; however, again inadequate resources are hampering the process. Finally, the issue of Coalition building amongst the COIN is of particular interest. In Oman a small Coalition of five members was established, in Kashmir India is running its own show, whilst ISAF comprises of some thirty seven nations. Although a numerous Coalition builds legitimacy, there is an overwhelming risk that the entire decision making process and ability to produce an effective strategy is hampered due to various national interests.

In conclusion, COIN operations can be successful when the insurgents are operating from safe havens in neighboring states. In order for the COIN to be successful, a number of prerequisites must be in place. The political and military leadership and the civilian and military operators on the ground have to be historical and cultural aware with regards to the region in which operations are conducted, especially with regards to the structural aspects in effect amongst the local populace. The strategy that drives the COIN effort must be centered upon an initial regional approach when dealing with cross border insurgencies. Both the insurgency in Kashmir and Afghanistan are examples of cross border insurgencies with strong regional aspects.

A well planned and coordinated application of the DIME is the key to success. The regional aspects of the cross border insurgencies call upon a diplomatic approach involving regional players as well as IO, IGO and NGOs. In Oman a coordinated application of the DIME proved successful, whereas the international community is struggling in both Kashmir and Afghanistan. Furthermore, the involvement of the local population in the decision making process is essential to success in order to apply solutions which are legitimate in the eyes of the local populace. The establishment of the PAG and the Tripartite Commission are significant steps in the right direction in this regard. Finally, the international community must fully understand the complexity of the region in which it becomes engaged. An initial diplomatic iron fist approach as executed by the United States toward Pakistan in the beginning of 2007 can backfire if it proves essential that any Pakistani actions taken must appear to be of Pakistani and not foreign origin. Such flaws can be countered through a sufficient historical and cultural understanding of the region.

The Informational instrument of national power is a proactive tool in the fight against the insurgency. This powerful instrument is difficult to control by nature, needs to be both primitive and sophisticated in nature and message. Primitive in nature when dealing with the local goatherd or illiterate and sophisticated and professional when dealing with the world press. The strategy must address the regional aspect of the cross border insurgency in a way acceptable to all parties involved.

The Military instrument of national power is a necessity in securing the populace. The application of the Military instrument must be immediately followed by reconstruction efforts aiming to mitigate poverty and everyday suffering. Executing projects, both long and short term, utilizing local labor is a way to counter the alarming unemployment figures which are potential recruitment bases for the insurgency. Sufficient boots on the ground is essential to maintain presence and thereby maintain legitimacy of the entire COIN effort. The Indian effort in Kashmir currently numbering some 600,000 troops is a good example of a COIN effort entailing a sufficient amount of troops.

Cross border coordination and execution of military operations as currently conducted in Afghanistan and Pakistan and formalized through first and foremost the Tripartite Commission and also the JPIC in Kabul and are viewed as steps in the right direction. Finally, unified action should be in effect through a transparent command structure with headed by one individual. Military operations must seek to minimize civilian losses and collateral damage. Heavy handed approaches as seen in Kashmir or unnecessary targeting of civilians are not conducive to the COIN winning the 'hearts and minds' of the local populace. Finally the establishment of a physical barrier on the

border, as a means to hinder the cross border incursions, is a viable tool in the overall approach. It proved successful in Oman in terms of the establishment of the four lines and also in Kashmir through the construction of the LoC.

The Economic instrument is important especially when dealing with underdeveloped populaces such as the ones in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan. A significant and long term effort like the one in Oman stands good chances of success. Decreasing poverty and providing jobs through economically secured programs are a safe way to gain legitimacy and support within the local populace. As for the previous instruments of national power, the Economic instrument must be applied in accordance with a well coordinated regional plan. If not, the risk of favoring one over the other, causing destabilization is present.

In lieu of the analysis of the case studies in Oman, Kashmir and Afghanistan, it is recommended that the international community address the current cross border insurgency in Afghanistan as a regional issue and subsequently seek a regional solution. The solution should be based upon profound historical and cultural studies, thereby mitigating the risks of attempting to impose structures upon the population which are doomed to fail from the onset. The international community must understand and even more so, accept that solutions applied in the Western world may not be the right solutions for the people in South Asia. The solution demands a well prepared, coordinated and sustainable application of all the instruments of national power and it should involve countries from more regions of the world in order to build legitimacy. Pakistan is key to any solution in that region of the world and therefore Pakistani interests will have to be considered in any future COIN efforts. It is particularly important to take into



consideration the Pakistani aversion against a strong and independent Afghanistan.

Finally, dealing with legitimacy building on one side, through large multinational and multicultural Coalitions, and on the other develop and apply a strategy, which considers national interests and caveats, is the greatest challenge of all in any future COIN effort.

Governing of Afghanistan should be focused around a decentralized model based upon tribal and local laws and traditions. Decentralization is the only long term solution that can be applied without the dependence of a significant and continuous foreign troop presence in Afghanistan. If in due time, the population of Afghanistan identifies the need for a central government, then that is fine; however, the construct should not be imposed by any outside power.

The economic effort in Afghanistan must mitigate the poverty quickly. Six to seven years have gone since the international community toppled Taliban and took on the ISAF task and thereby the responsibility for developing Afghanistan. However, more than 50% of the population is still living below the poverty line. The Afghan population understandably finds it hard to accept the fact that progress is so slow underway. Therefore, coordinated and long term based efforts to develop the agricultural and industrial trades should be applied.

The security situation within Afghanistan is slowly becoming better; however, ISAF and United States forces are struggling with a number of issues which need to be addressed. The current force level is far too low. ISAF and the ANA have great problems holding taken ground which is crucial to build popular support for the COIN effort. The fact that the current force in Afghanistan is smaller than the one entering Kosovo in 1999, 40,000 troops as opposed to 45,000 is alarming. ISAF is faced with the task of securing a

country the size of France as opposed to a province one third the size of Belgium. Boots on the ground is a critical requirement and it needs to be fulfilled immediately.

The national caveats, which greatly limit the operational capability of the forces in Afghanistan, must go away. TCN must understand the scope of the conflict and the responsibility of international community. Finally, unified action is a prerequisite for success. IO, NGO, IGO have to create the necessary coordinating bodies and engage in extensive on the ground cooperation in order to maximize the efforts. Certain steps have been taken and momentum must be maintained. Militarily, the forces should come under one command, discarding the parallel command structure currently in effect. A transparent command structure led by one individual will mitigate constant coordination issues, lack of sharing of information and in general add to the operational flexibility of ISAF. The nationality of the ISAF commander should then shift between the troop contributing nations, including Afghanistan. An Afghan commander is seen as significant tool in building legitimacy of the COIN effort.

In conclusion, COIN operations can be successful against a cross border insurgency. The COIN must assume a strategic approach encompassing all the instruments of national power. Prior to the application of the elements of the DIME, both the political and military actors should conduct a thorough historical and cultural analysis in order to fully comprehend the region in which operations are going to be executed. Once counterinsurgency operations have commenced, progress must appear immediately, especially with regards to issues such as: security, poverty, medical care and unemployment. Finally, cohesion and persistence on the COIN part are crucial. Once engaged in the COIN fight, the international community must stay the course. Incessant

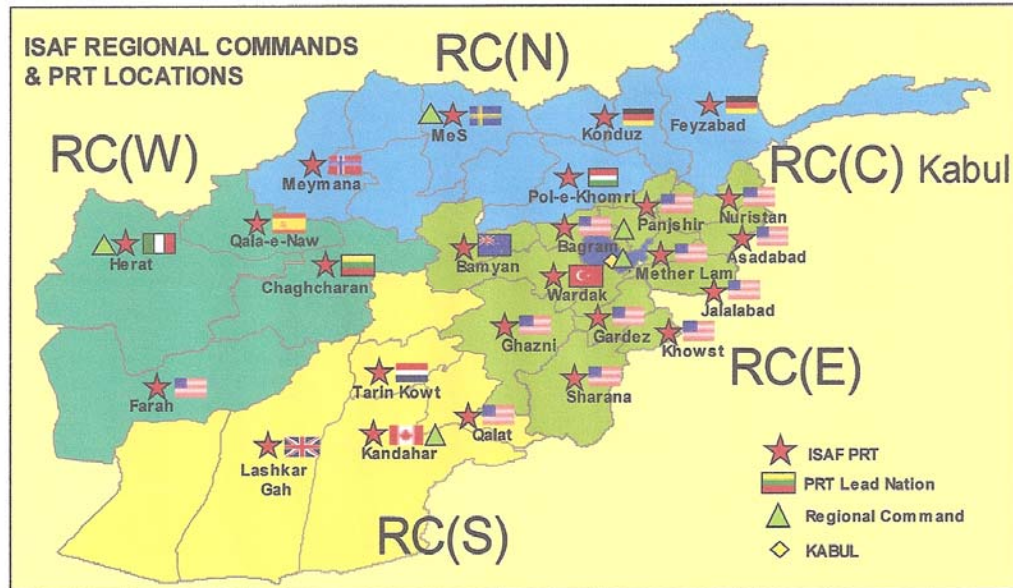
political debates regarding extraction, limitation of forces and national caveats only serve the purpose of the insurgency.

## APPENDIX A

### ISAF Regional Commands



## International Security Assistance Force



**Mission:** Conduct military operations in the assigned area of operations to assist the Government of Afghanistan in the establishment and maintenance of a safe and secure environment with full engagement of Afghan National Security Forces, in order to extend government authority and influence, thereby facilitating Afghanistan's reconstruction and contributing to regional stability.

#### Key Facts:

- Commander: General (US) Dan K. MCNEILL
- Current HQ: HQ ISAF X (US lead) from 4 FEB 2007
- 37 Troop Contributing Nations
- ISAF Total Strength: Approx 36,750 (Includes National Contingent Commands)
- Remaining US Contingent: Approx 15,000 (Operation Enduring Freedom)
- ISAF AOR (Afghanistan land mass) 650,000 km(sq)
- 25 Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT)

#### Regional Command Capital: (Approx Strength 5000)

- HQ ISAF in Kabul (Composite)
- HQ RC(C) in Kabul (FR)
- KAIA (BU)

#### Regional Command South: (Approx Strength 11,500)

- HQ RC(S) in KANDAHAR (NL)
- Forward Support Base KAF
- PRT KANDAHAR (CA)
- PRT LASHKAR-GAH (UK, DA, ES)
- PRT TARIN KOWT (NL, AUS)
- PRT QALAT (US, RO)

#### Regional Command West: (Approx Strength 2100)

- HQ RC(W) in HERAT (IT)
- Forward Support Base HERAT (SP)
- PRT HERAT (IT)
- PRT FARAH (US)
- PRT QALA-E-NAW (SP)
- PRT CHAGHCHARAN (LI)

#### Regional Command North: (Approx Strength 3000)

- HQ RC(N) in MAZAR-E-SHARIF (GE)
- Forward Support Base MAZAR-E-SHARIF (GE)
- PRT MAZAR-E-SHARIF (SWE)
- PRT FEYZABAD (GE)
- PRT KONDUZ (GE)
- PRT POL-E KHOMRI (HU)
- PRT MEYMANA (NO)

#### Regional Command East: (Approx Strength 13,500)

- HQ RC(E) in BAGRAM (US)
- Forward Support Base BAGRAM (US)
- PRT SHARANA (US)
- PRT KHOST (US)
- PRT METHER LAM (US)
- PRT BAMYAN (NZL)
- PRT PANJSHIR (US)
- PRT JALALABAD (US)
- PRT GHAZNI (US)
- PRT ASADABAD (US)
- PRT BAGRAM (US)
- PRT NURISTAN (US)
- PRT WARDAK (TU)
- PRT GARDEZ (US)

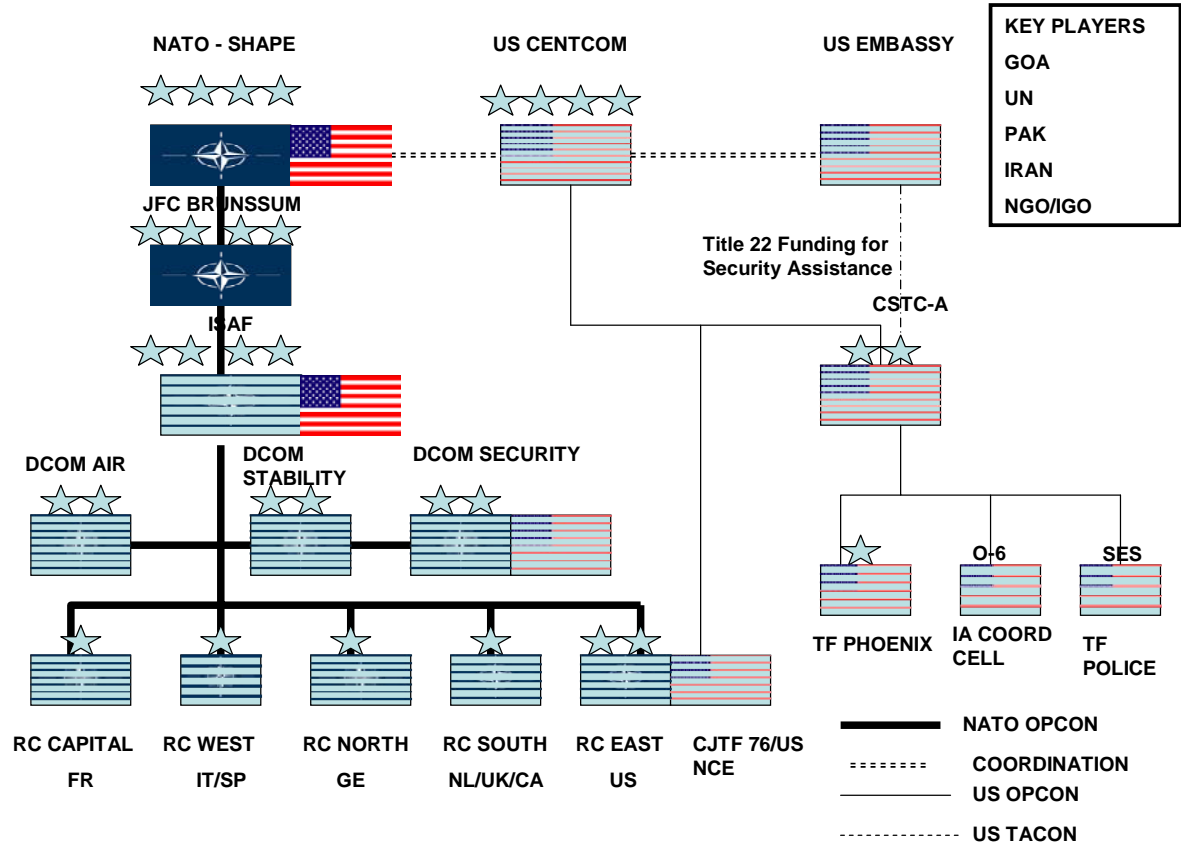
#### National Contingent Commands (Approx Strength 1650)

Current as of 20 Apr 2007

Source: NATO WebPage, at <http://www.nato.int/isaf/index.html>.

## APPENDIX B

### ISAF and US Command Structure November 2007



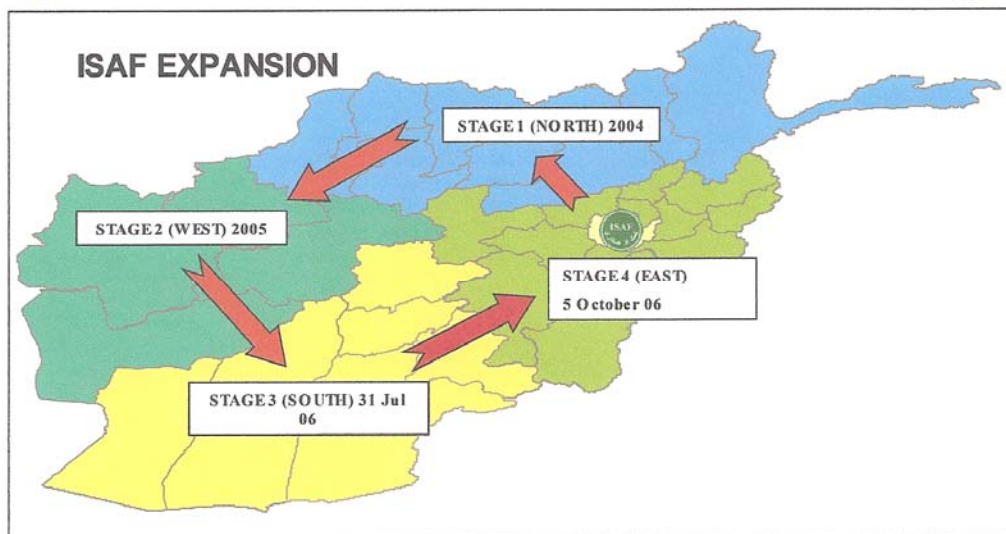
*Source:* LtCol John Rochelle UK Army, instructor at United States Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. November 2007.

## APPENDIX C

### ISAF Expansion



International Security Assistance Force



**NATO Mission in Afghanistan:** On the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2003 NATO assumed authority for the ISAF mission. The NATO mission consists of 5 phases;

- Phase 1 Assessment and Preparation, including operations in Kabul (completed)
- Phase 2 Geographic expansion
- Phase 3 Stabilization
- Phase 4/5 Transition / Redeployment

**Phase 2 Expansion:** In October 2003 The UN Security Council authorized the expansion of the NATO mission beyond Kabul. In October 2004 Stage 1 of the expansion to the north was completed with Stage 2 in the West following in September 2005. Stage 3 of the expansion to include the South was completed on 31 July 2006 and Stage 4 to include the East occurred on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2006, at which stage the geographic expansion phase was completed.

**Troop Contributing Nations (TCN):** On completion of Stage 4 expansion the ISAF mission consists of the following 37 Nations. (The troop numbers are based on broad contribution and do not reflect the exact numbers on the ground at any one time)

	Albania	30		Estonia	90		Lithuania	130		Slovenia	50
	Australia	500		Finland	70		Luxembourg	10		Spain	550
	Austria	5		France	1000		Netherlands	2200		Sweden	180
	Azerbaijan	20		The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*	120		New Zealand	100		Switzerland	5
	Belgium	300		Germany	3000		Iceland	5		Turkey	800
	Bulgaria	100		Greece	170		Norway	500		United Kingdom	5200
	Canada	2500		Hungary	180		Poland	300		United States	15,000
	Croatia	130		Ireland	10		Portugal	150			
	Czech Republic	150		Italy	1950		Romania	750		TOTAL	36,750
	Denmark	400		Latvia	35		Slovakia	60			

\* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name

Current as of 20 Apr 2007

Source: NATO WebPage at <http://www.nato.int/isaf/index.html>.

## APPENDIX D

### Case Study Comparison Table

Variable/insurgency	Oman	Kashmir	Afghanistan
Non permissive terrain	Yes	Yes	Yes
Border length in km	288 km	700 km	2500 km
Cross border ethnicity	Very limited	Yes – extensive	Yes - extensive
Strong central government	Yes – Omani	Yes - Indian	No – Afghan
Poverty and unemployment	Yes	Yes	Yes
External influence for the insurgency	Yes – limited	Yes – but limited	Yes - extensive
External influence for the COIN	Yes – extensive	Yes – but limited	Yes - extensive
Insurgency strategy/goal	Independence – turned to ideology	Religious driven	Ethnic driven – turned to religious.
COIN strategy	DIME approach heavy on the hearts and minds	Heavy handed and massive in numbers	Limited – developing into regional approach
COIN Coalition	Yes – 5 members	No	Yes – 37 members
Level of historical and cultural understanding by the COIN	High and constantly developed	Limited	Limited
Regional aspects	Limited	Yes	Extensive

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